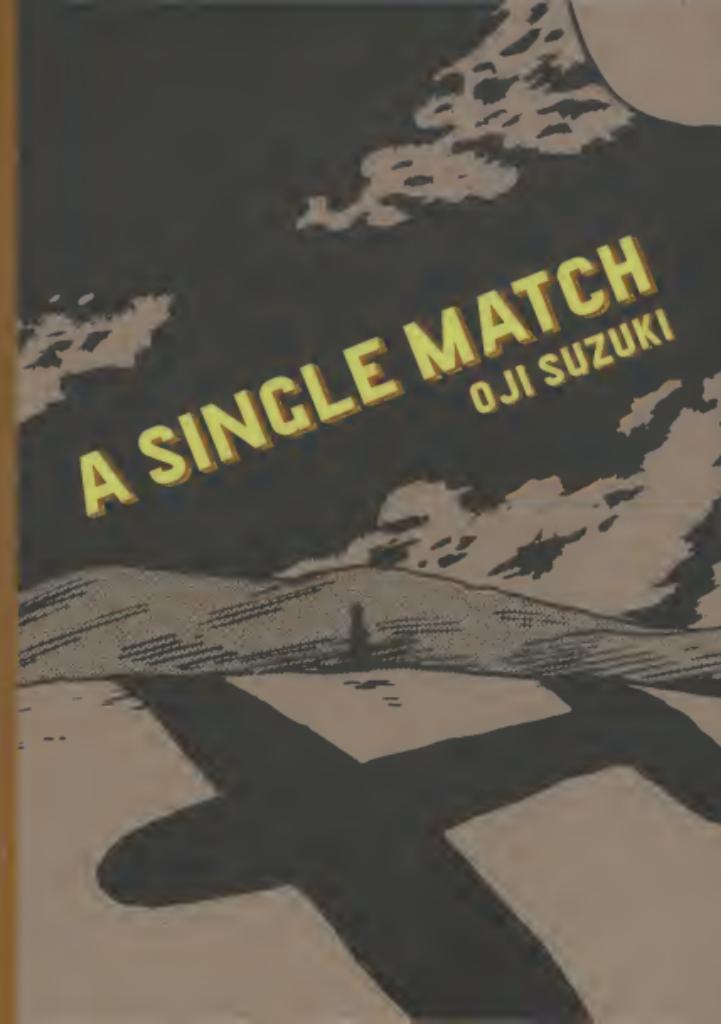
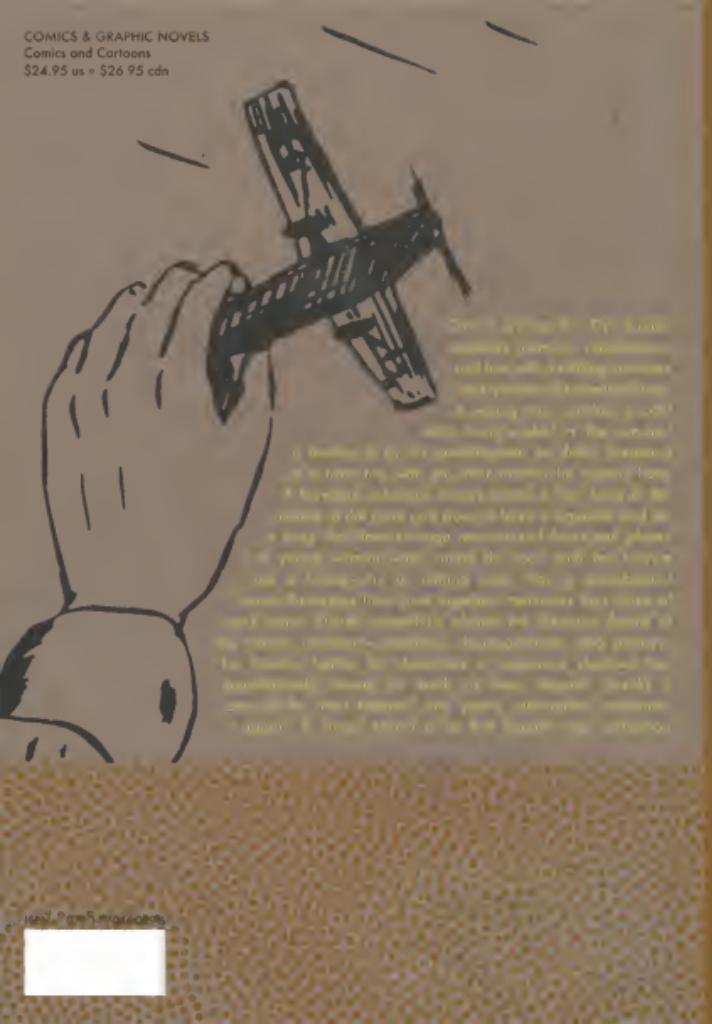


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A SINGLE MATCH

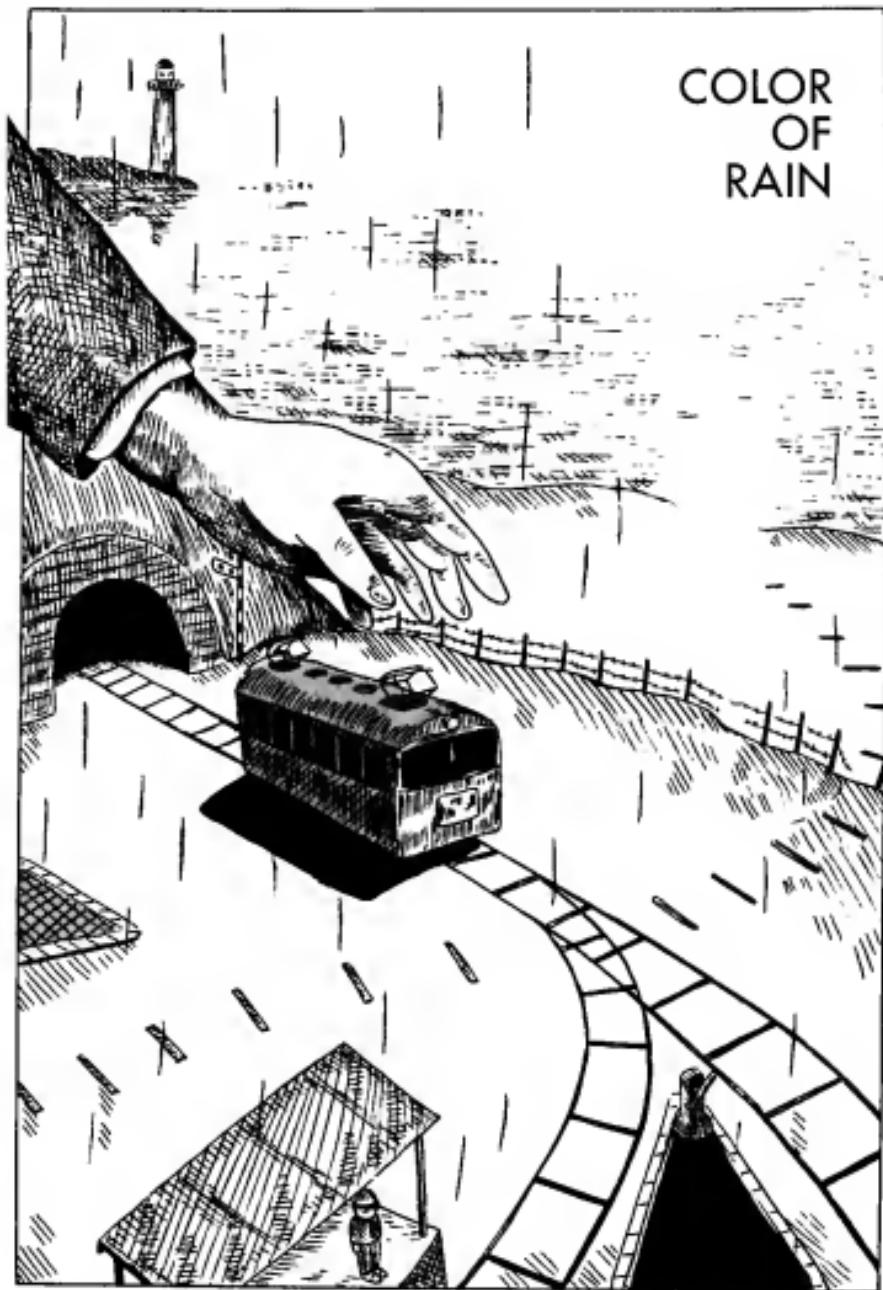
OJI SUZUKI



A SINGLE MATCH

COLOR OF RAIN
HIGHWAY TOWN
A SINGLE MATCH
TALE OF REMEMBRANCE
WORLD COLORED PANTS
EVENING PRIMROSE
TOWN OF SONG
CRYSTAL THOUGHTS
MOUNTAIN TOWN
FRUIT OF THE SEA
CITY OF DREAMS

COLOR
OF
RAIN







AND WHAT
WOULD YOU
DO IF YOU
CAUGHT
PNEUMONIA?

HMM?



AHHH

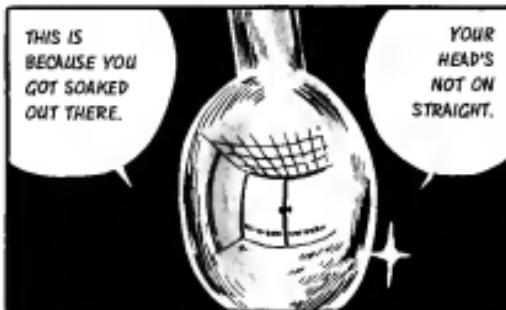
WHAT A
HUGE FLY.



B

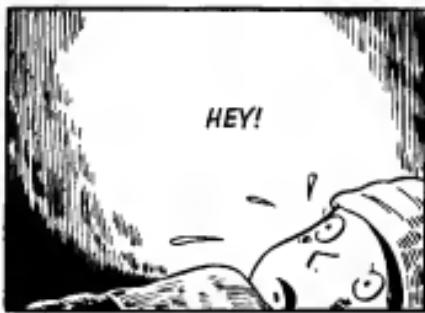








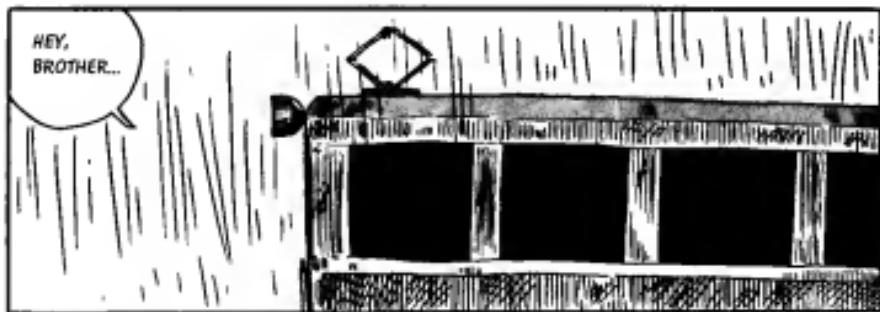




C'MON!





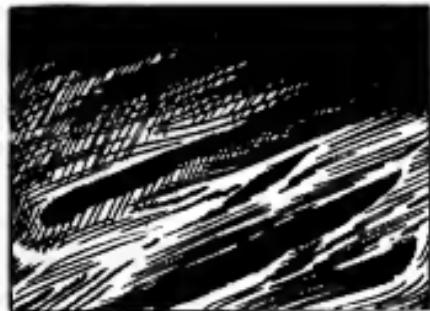
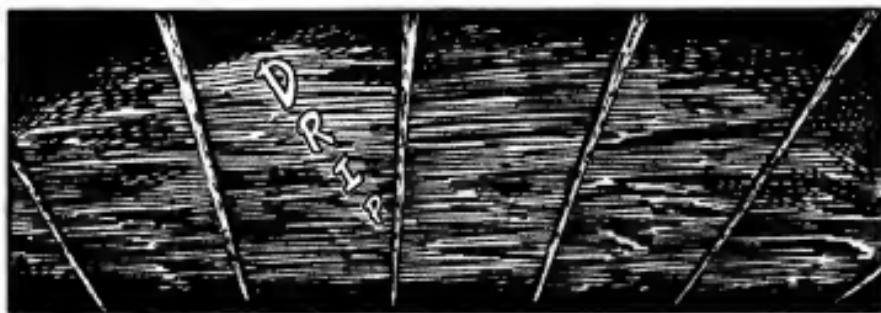


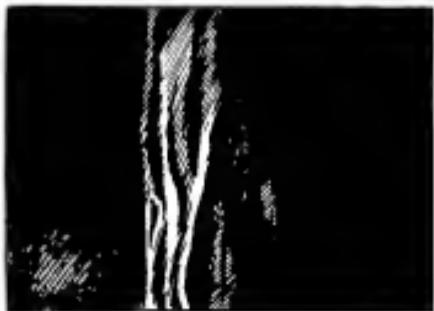




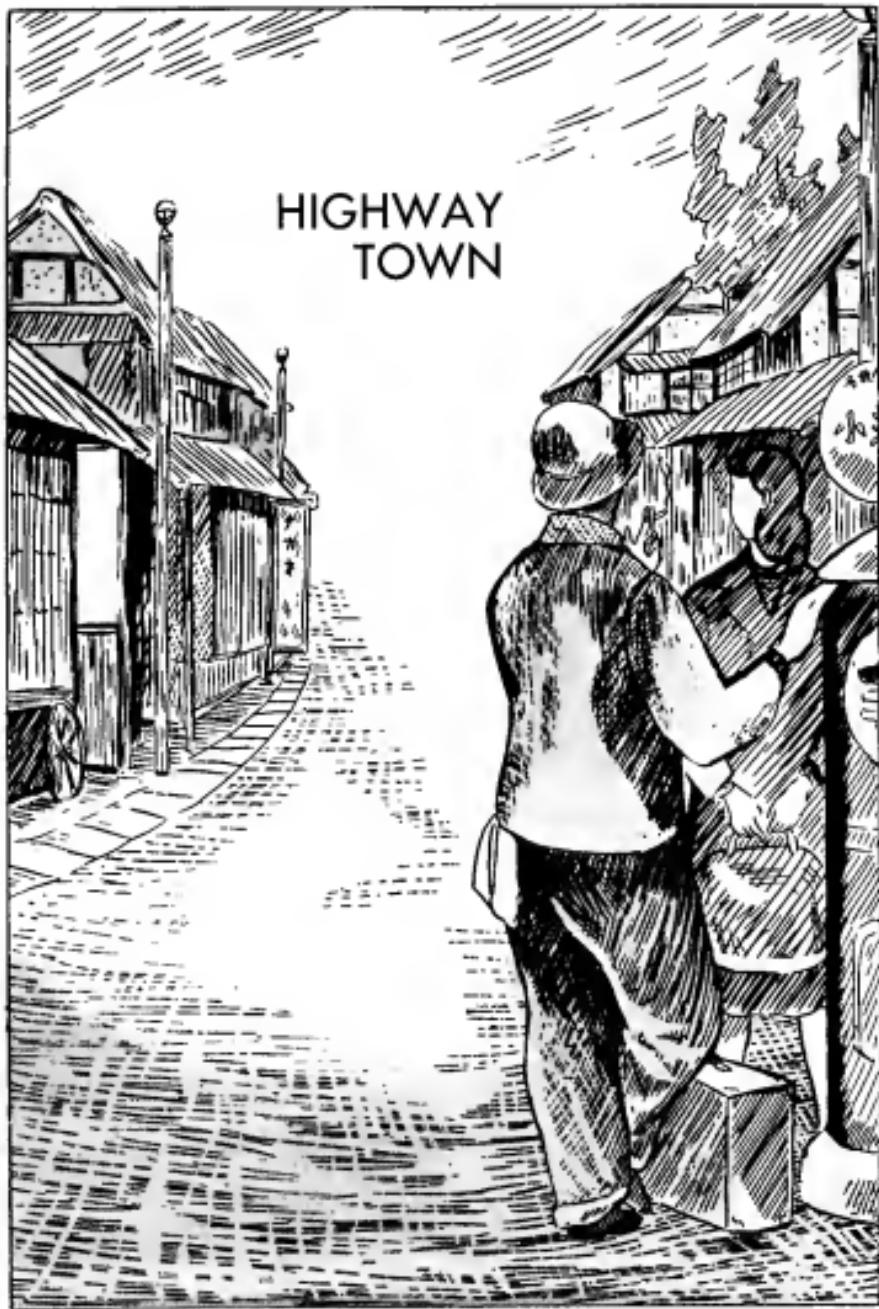








HIGHWAY TOWN



EVERYONE
CALLED KYOKO
A HALFWIT.



"STREET-LAMP
KYOKO"
—THEY
CALLED
HER THAT
SOMETIMES,
TOO.



SIGN: ISHIKAWA DRESSMAKERS

SHE LIVED WITH
AN OLD CAT IN A
SMALL THREE-MAT
ROOM BEHIND
THE SOUTHERN
ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL.



SHE GOT BY
ON THE LITTLE
MONEY SHE
RECEIVED
FROM THE
TOWN
HALL.

AND ON
LEFTOVER
LUNCHES
FROM THE
SCHOOL
KITCHEN.



AS THOSE OLD
PEOPLE—ONCE FOUND
IN ANY TOWN—
HAD DONE
BEFORE HER...

SHE BECAME
A SHADOW
LINGERED
ON THE SIDE OF
THE MOUNTAIN...



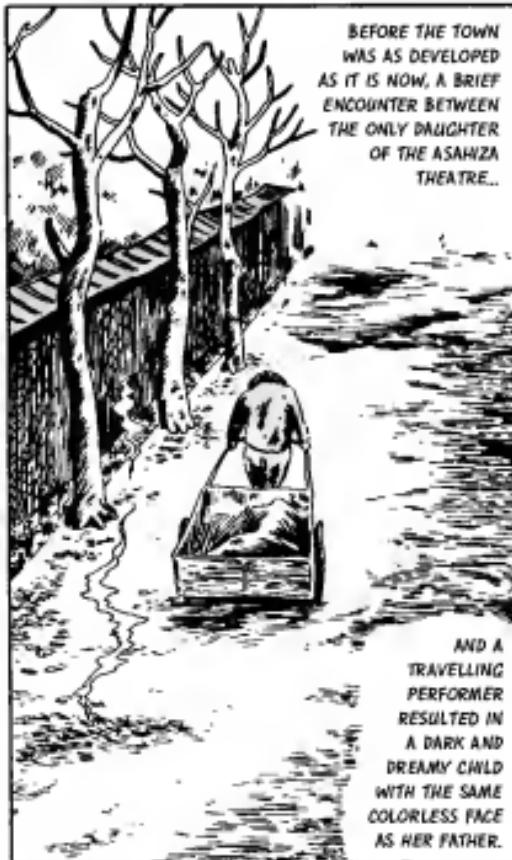


ACCORDING
TO THE
STORY
THAT STILL
LINGERED
IN TOWN...



SIGN (TOP TO BOTTOM): --RI; NAITO SHOES

BEFORE THE TOWN
WAS AS DEVELOPED
AS IT IS NOW, A BRIEF
ENCOUNTER BETWEEN
THE ONLY DAUGHTER
OF THE ASAHIWA
THEATRE...



AND A
TRAVELLING
PERFORMER
RESULTED IN
A DARK AND
DREAMY CHILD
WITH THE SAME
COLORLESS FACE
AS HER FATHER.

FOR ALL THAT,
THEY SAY SHE
WAS QUITE A
CUTE LITTLE GIRL.

DRESSED UP
IN HER DEEP-
RED KIMONO,
SHE REALLY
DID LOOK
BEAUTIFUL.



AT AGE EIGHT, KYOKO'S MOTHER RAN AWAY.
SHE STOOD IN THE ROAD, WAVING
AND CRYING, WHILE
HER MOTHER
DISAPPEARED
OVER THE
MOUNTAINS.



AND
THEN
PEOPLE
DIED.
SHE KILLED
HER FIRST
CHILD WHEN
SHE WAS
THIRTEEN
AND FROM
THEN ON...



SHE MADE
MEN SMILE
EACH TIME
SHE
BLINKED.



AS IF IN
A DREAM...



WHEN EVENING FELL, KYOKO
WOULD WALK ALONG AND
LIGHT EACH OF THE STREET
LAMPS LINING THE MAIN
ROAD—STARTING WITH THE
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND
ENDING AT THE RAILWAY
CROSSING AT THE NORTH
SIDE OF TOWN.



SO, THE WOMAN
AT THE RICE
STORE DUBBED
HER "STREET-
LAMP KYOKO."



NOW, THIS WAS AGES AGO, WASN'T IT? BUT KYOKO HAD A SPECIAL FRIEND; HE CAME TRUDGING UP THE ROAD TO SEE HER EVERY DAY WHEN HE FINISHED WORK.

KYOKO WOULD COME OUT TO THE RAILROAD CROSSING TO MEET HIM. SHE WAITED THERE PATIENTLY UNTIL SHE SAW HIM.



SHE WOULD GET RESTLESS WHEN THE SUN STARTED TO SET AND SHE WOULD ARRIVE AT THE CROSSING TOO EARLY. THIS IS HOW SHE CAME UP WITH THE IDEA OF LIGHTING THE STREET LAMPS WHILE WALKING UP THE STREET.



HE WOULD DOUSE THE LAMPS ON HIS WAY HOME.

JUST THINKING ABOUT MEETING HER FRIEND AT THE CROSSING GAVE HER SUCH PLEASURE.



AND THEY WERE SO CLOSE.

I OFTEN USED TO SEE THEM WALKING TOGETHER.

I'M SURE HE WAS A KIND PERSON, A GOOD PERSON.

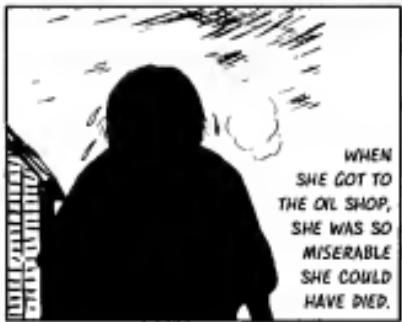
I'M SURE OF IT.











WHEN WAS IT EXACTLY?

THE NIGHT OF THE CHINESE LANTERN FESTIVAL, KYOKO WAS DRUNK AND THE MASTER OF THE OIL SHOP ASSAULTED HER.

C
A
W
C
A
W
C
A
W
H
E
H
E
H

HEH
HEH
HEH

C
A
W

AAAH!
IT HURTS!!
IT HURTS!!!

KYOKO HAD LONG THOUGHT THE MASTER OF THE OIL SHOP WAS A HANDSOME MAN. DEEP DOWN, SHE WAS HAPPY. BUT...

WHAT?
YOU STILL GET YOUR PERIOD AT THIS AGE???

C
A
W

ONE, ONE PERSON,
KYOKO

C
A
W

TWO, TWO PEOPLE,
THEY WANTED TO GET MARRIED.

WITH THOSE WORDS, HE LEFT.

KYOKO WAS SO ASHAMED, SHE WANTED TO DISAPPEAR.

ONE, ONE PERSON,
KYOKO

C
A
W

EVERYONE IN TOWN LAUGHS WHEN I LIGHT THE LAMPS.

EVERYONE...
EVERYONE...

THREE, EVERYONE
LAUGHED AT THEM.

FOUR, SHE
NEEDN'T HAVE
BOTHERED WITH THE
STREET LAMPS.

NEVER
MIND.
NEVER
MIND.

FIVE, SIX...

LIGHT THEM UP
AND WALK ON.

SEVEN...

LONG SLOPES
AND THE SANDAL
STRAP BREAKS.

EIGHT, THE
FAR SIDE OF THE
MOUNTAIN IS
A MONKEY'S BUTT.

NINE, WE
DECIDED TO REST
HERE AND...

AT TEN, WE WERE
OUT OF BREATH
AFTER ALL.



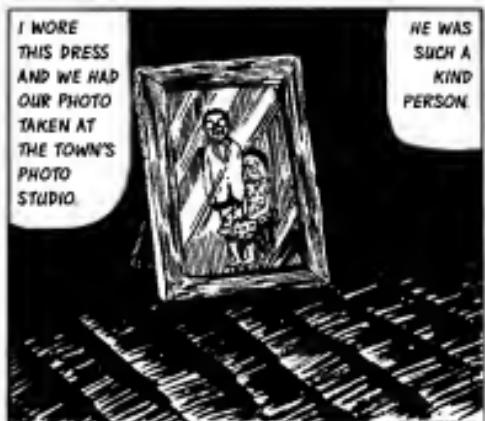
PERHAPS
KYOKO
WAS AT
PEACE
IN HER
HEART
THAT
NIGHT.



THE POLKA
DOT DRESS
HANGING
ON THE
WALL WAS
CERTAINLY
BEAUTIFUL
IN THE
LIGHT OF
THE BULB.



I WAS SO
ASHAMED OF
SUCH A SHOWY
DRESS. HE...HE
SAID IT LOOKED
REALLY GOOD
ON ME.



I WORE
THIS DRESS
AND WE HAD
OUR PHOTO
TAKEN AT
THE TOWN'S
PHOTO
STUDIO.

HE WAS
SUCH A
KIND
PERSON.



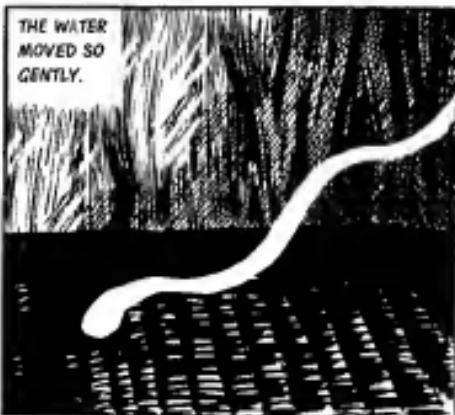
I'M A
REAL
IDIOT...
BUT
HIM...

KYOKO
SUDENLY
REMEM-
BERED.



THAT'S RIGHT.
HE'S COMING
TONIGHT. WHEN
HE COMES LATE
AFTER WORK-
ING OVERTIME,
HE OFTEN
IMITATES A
CRICKET.

AAH, WHAT
SHOULD I
DO, WHAT
SHOULD I
DO? I'M
ASHAMED
OF MY
PERIOD.
WHAT'LL I
DO IF HE
LAUGHS
AT ME?





AND THEN,
KYOKO
TOOK ON
HER
SISTER'S
FEATURES...

AND
FELL
ASLEEP.



CLOSE TO
MORNING...

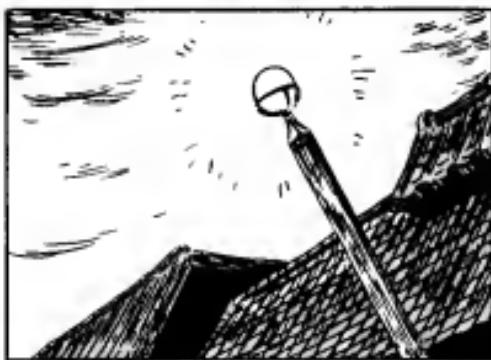
GENTLY
OPENING
HER EYES,
KYOKO
WONDERED...

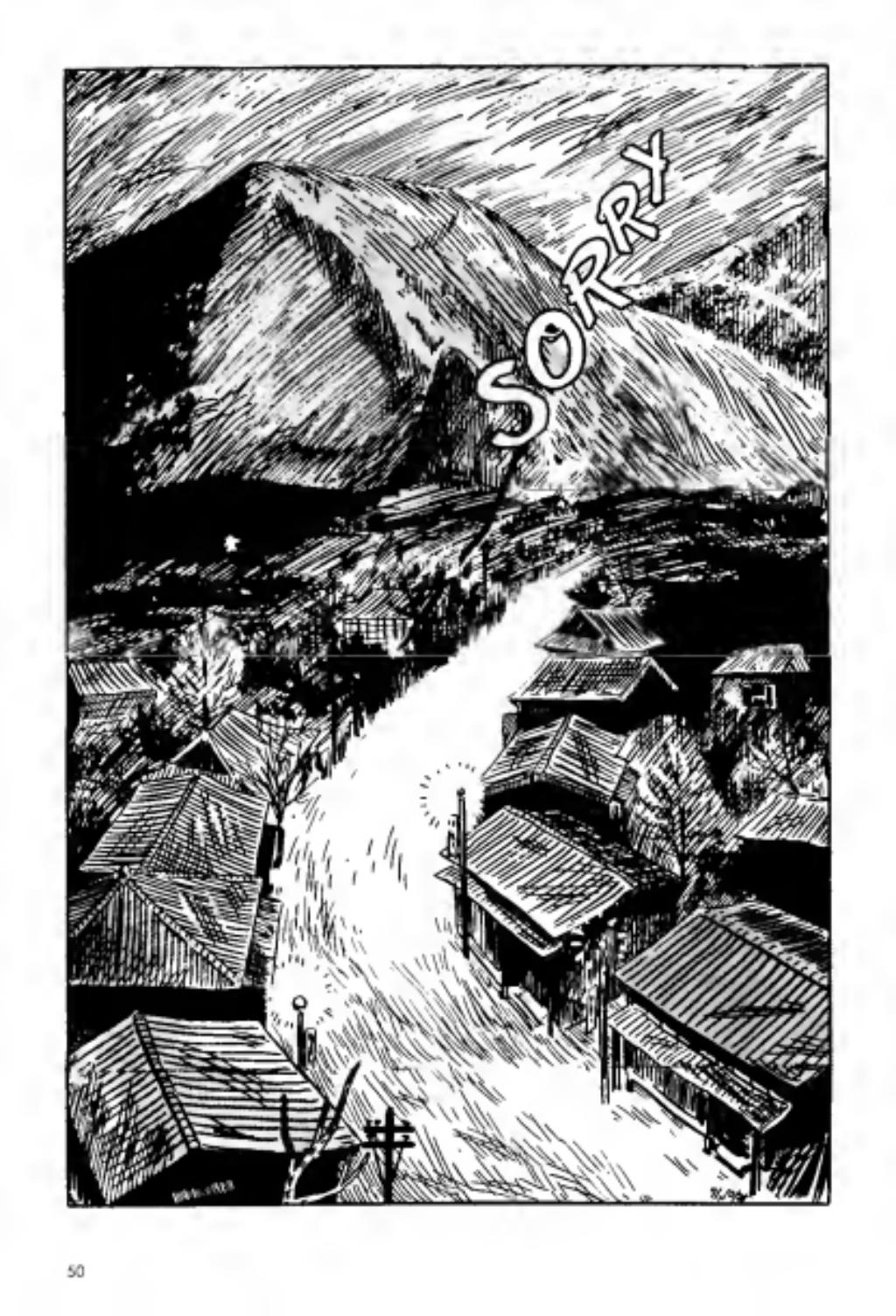
DID HE
TURN OUT
THE STREET
LAMPS ON
HIS WAY
HERE?

AND









SORRY



A SINGLE MATCH









THE STARS
ARE BEAUTIFUL.



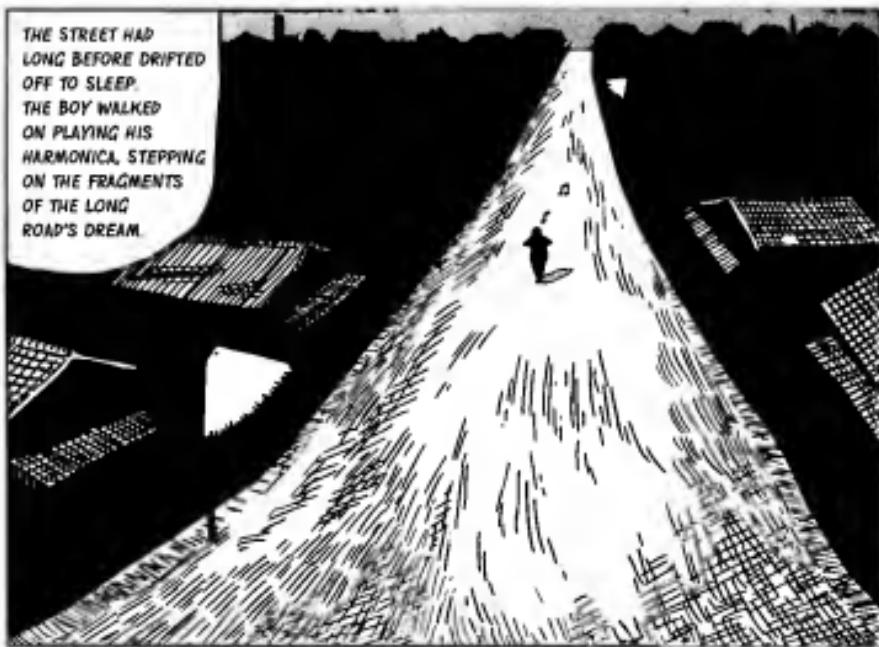
LIKE A
YOUNG
DETECTIVE,
THE BOY
LEFT
HOME...

SECRETLY
AND WITH
A SONG IN
HIS HEART.



100-1000
100-1000

THE STREET HAD
LONG BEFORE DRIFTED
OFF TO SLEEP.
THE BOY WALKED
ON PLAYING HIS
HARMONICA, STEPPING
ON THE FRAGMENTS
OF THE LONG
ROAD'S DREAM.



AND THE
COLOR, ON
A NIGHT SO
BLUE, MADE
HIM WANT
TO CRY...

THE
HARMONICA
SANG.





"THAT'S IT. I'LL VISIT THAT BOY AND WE'LL PLAY HARMONICA TOGETHER!" THE BOY BEGAN TO WALK AGAIN.

LOOKING BACK, THE BOY COULD SEE THE LIGHT OF THE MAN'S CIGARETTE, A FIERY SIGNPOST.





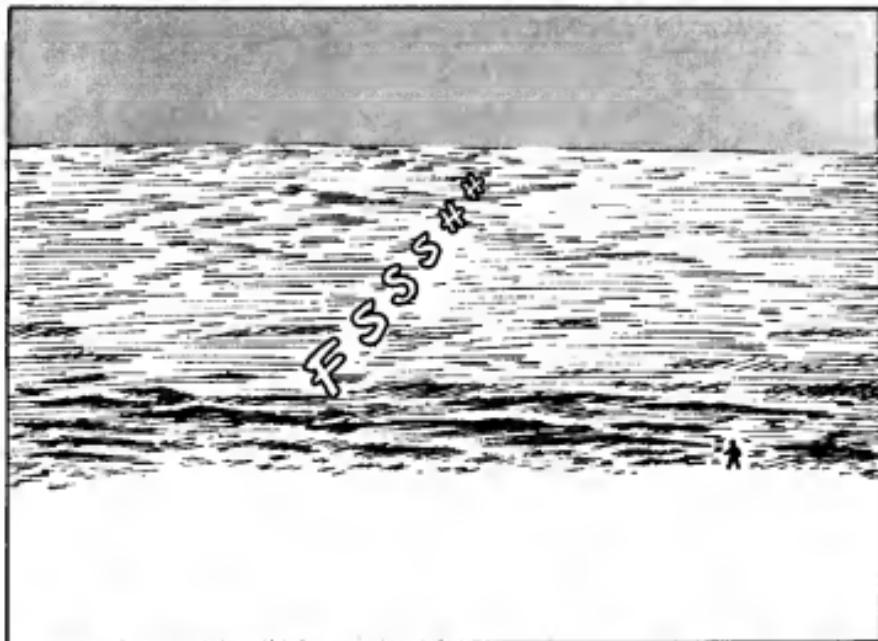




IN EXCHANGE FOR
THE BISCUITS THE
LADY OF THE HOUSE
HAD GIVEN HIM, THE
BOY SECRETLY LEFT
HIS HARMONICA IN
THE MAILBOX.

THAT KID CAN
PLAY IT WHEN
HE GROWS UP.
I'LL GET THEM TO
LET ME PLAY A
SILVER FLUTE IN
THE BAND.







HELLO!
WHERE'RE
YOU OFF
TO?

HELLO!
TO THE
CAPE.



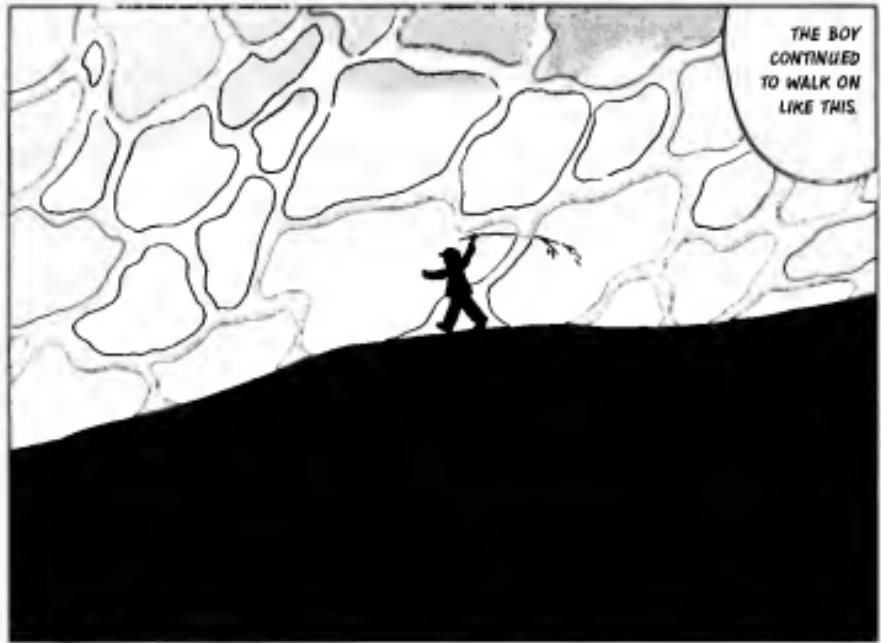
CHUG CHUG CHUG

OK! OK!
TAKE
CARE!

SEE
YOU
LATER!

CHUG CHUG CHUG





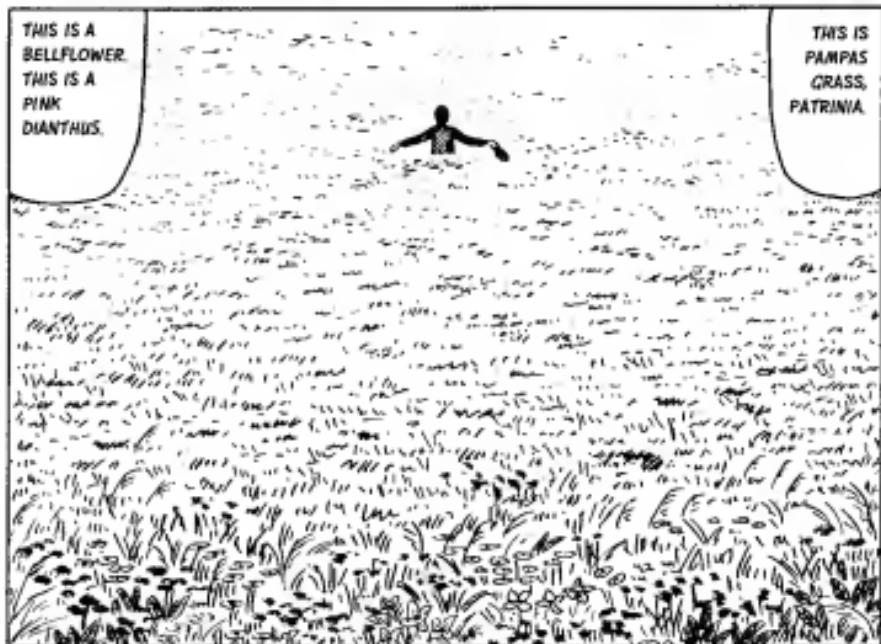
WHAT KIND
OF FLOWER
IS THIS?
WHAT KIND
OF FLOWER
IS THIS?

AND WHAT
KIND OF
FLOWER IS
THIS ONE?



THIS IS A
BELLFLOWER.
THIS IS A
PINK
DIANTHUS.

THIS IS
PAMPAS
GRASS,
PATRINI.



FOR THREE AND A
HALF YEARS, THE
BOY LIVED IN A
SMALL TOWN
EMBRACED BY
MOUNTAINS.



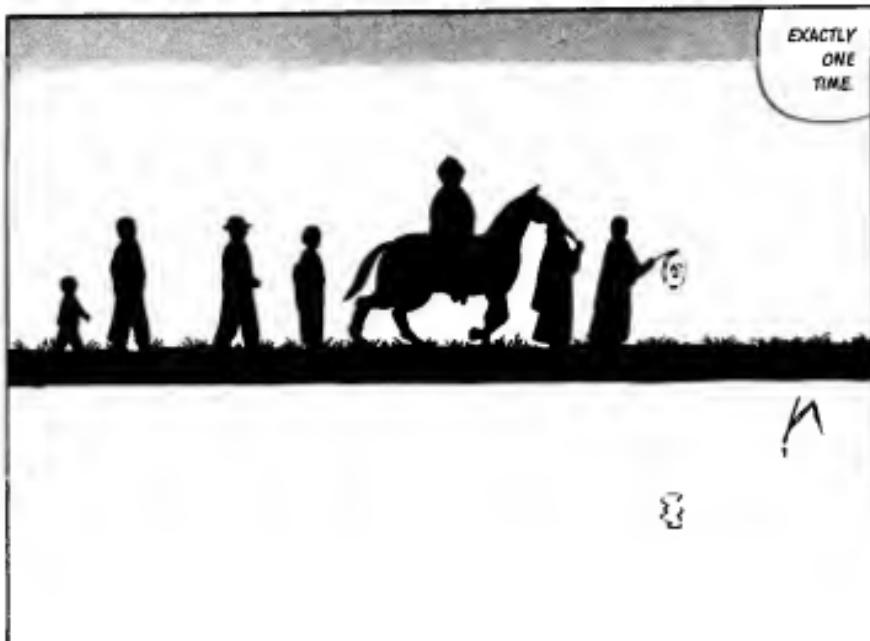
THIS...

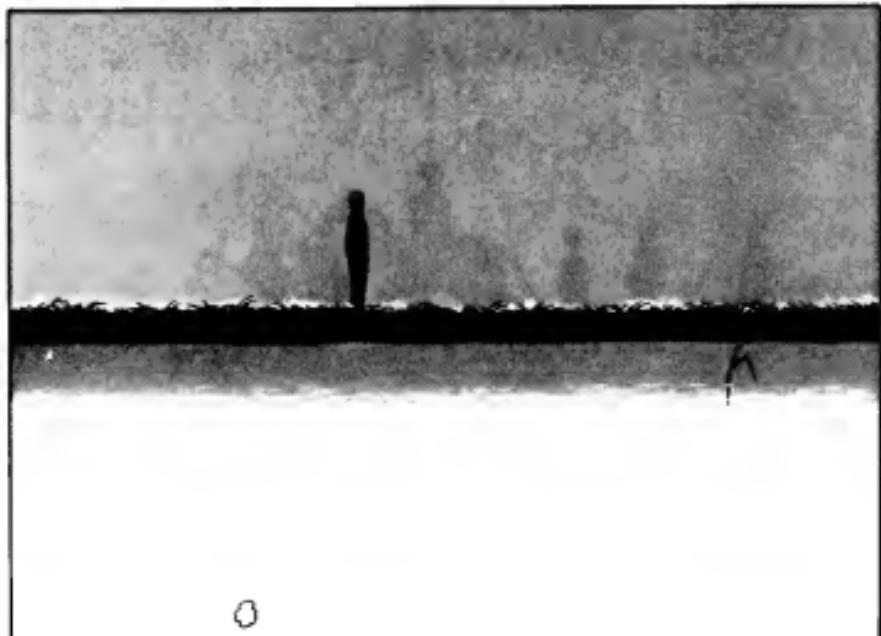
UW...



THIS WAS BECAUSE
HE WAS GREATLY
INTRIGUED BY THE
GIRL'S STRANGELY
FEARFUL WAY OF
STRIKING A MATCH,
EVEN THOUGH HER
FINGERS WERE
SO LONG.







WHAT STAR
IS THAT?
WHAT STAR
IS THAT?

AND
WHAT
STAR IS
THAT?

THAT'S
THAT
ONE,
THAT'S
THAT
ONE

THAT'S
THE
ONE,
THAT'S
THE
ONE



AGAIN AND AGAIN
AGAIN AND AGAIN
THE STARS CAME
FALLING DOWN.



AGAIN AND AGAIN
AGAIN AND AGAIN
THE SNOW CAME
FALLING DOWN.



AND THEN AGAIN,
AGAIN AND AGAIN
THE FLOWER
PETALS WERE
SCATTERED BY
THE WIND.

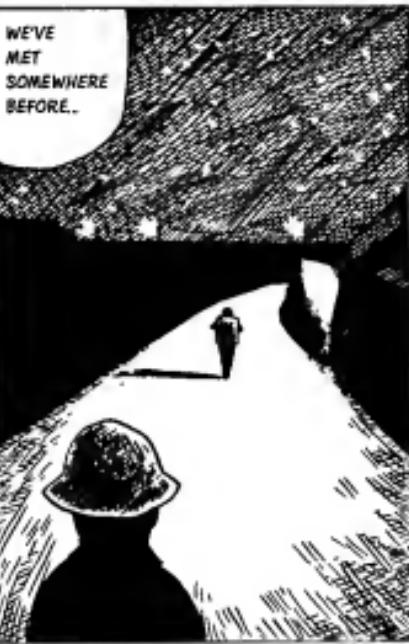




P_0 H_{++} H_{++} H_{++} H_{++}











HIS TEARS HAD STOPPED COMPLETELY, COLLECTING ON HIS EYELASHES, BLURRING WHAT WAS IN THE AIR. A FEELING ABOUT AS WARM AS THE MATCH LIT FOR HIM EARLIER...

PIERCED THE BOY'S COLD CHEST AND SPREAD THROUGH HIM.



PSHHH!

IN AN INSTANT, HE SAW THE FACE FROM EARLIER BEFORE HIS EYES.



AND LONG AGO,
THE BOY PLAYED
HARMONICA. LONG
AGO, HE WALKED
STEADILY,
ENERGETICALLY.

LONG AGO, HE
LOVED THE LONG
FINGERS THAT
STRUCK THE
MATCH. NOW,
THAT BOY,
BACK BENT...



WENT
SLOWLY ON
THE SAME
ROAD THE
SALESMAN
TOOK...

YES.
THAT'S
RIGHT.
SLOWLY...

HE
WALKED
ON.









N-NAH,
NOT YET.



TALE OF REMEMBRANCE





LONELINESS...

WAS IT
FROM
BEHIND?

I SAW IT
ONCE IN A
TOWN IN
ANOTHER
COUNTRY.

WAS THERE A
BLUENESS TO
ITS MOMENTARY
SHADOW?



SHE WAS
A CUTE
GIRL.

SHE WAS
A KIND
GIRL.

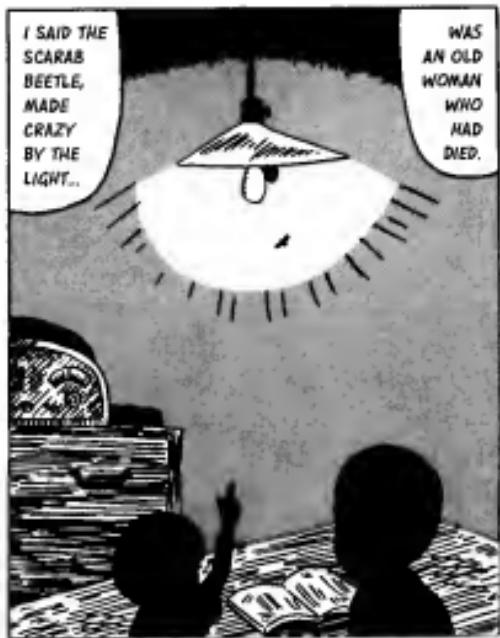


AFTER
WE MET
IN THE
DREAM
TOWN...

I WAITED
AND
WAITED
FOR HER...

IN THE
STEAM
UNTIL
THE END
OF TIME.

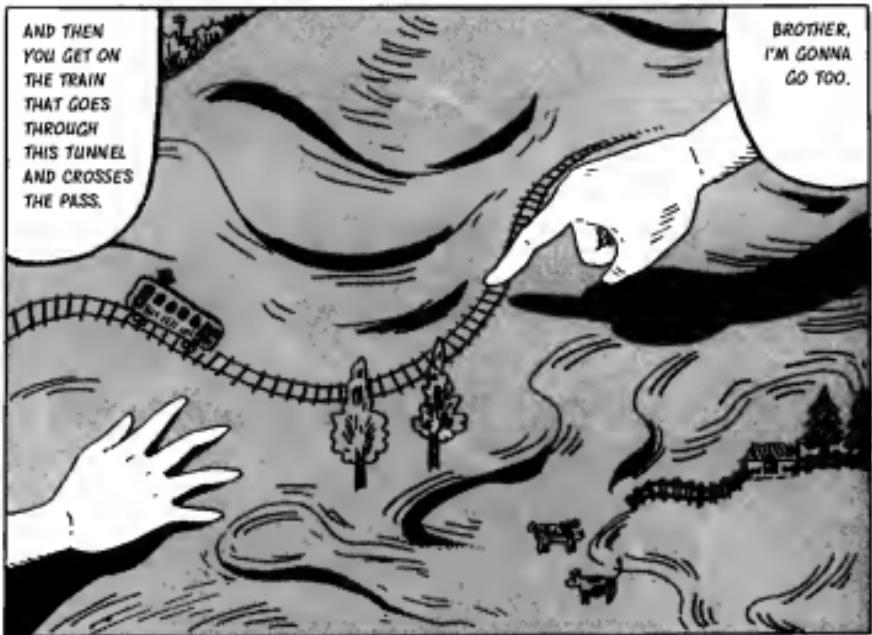






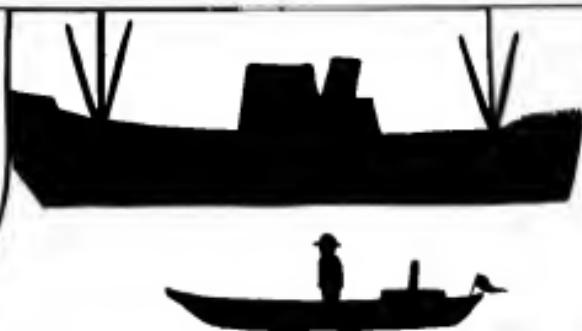
AND THEN
YOU GET ON
THE TRAIN
THAT GOES
THROUGH
THIS TUNNEL
AND CROSSES
THE PASS.

BROTHER,
I'M GONNA
GO TOO.



SHOULD WE
GET ON A
BOAT FROM
THE PORT
BRIDGE AND
GO TO A
COUNTRY ON
THE OTHER
SIDE OF THE
OCEAN?

YEAH.
I'M GONNA
GO TOO.



AND WHEN
WE GET
TIRED FROM
THE TRIP,
THE TWO
OF US...

WE FALL
ASLEEP
HOLDING
HANDS.



ELECTRICITY
FLOWS
FROM
OUR
HANDS...

BECAUSE
WE PLAY
TOGETHER
IN OUR
DREAMS.





IF I CAREFULLY
TOOK AWAY MY
HAND ONCE
SHE FELL
ASLEEP...

EVEN THOUGH
SHE WAS SUPPOSED
TO BE SLEEPING,
SHE WOULD HIDE
HER FACE IN THE
EDGE OF THE
FUTON...

AND
JUST
WEEP,
JUST
WEEP.

HER
ENDLESS
SOBING
WAS THE
USUAL.

WHEN
WAS
THAT?



*B
R₀
T_H
E
E
E
R_{RR}*



AH, WHEN
WAS THAT?
NOT KNOWING
WHAT TO DO...

ONLY, ONLY
DIMLY, I
JUST HELD
HER WITH
ALL MY
MIGHT.



AAAH, IF HER
SADNESS
WOULD
DISAPPEAR, IF
WE COULD
JUST GO ON
LIKE THIS...

I WOULDN'T CARE
HOW HARD IT GOT
FOR ME. AAAAH, IF
THIS NIGHT COULD
GO ON FOREVER,
TO THE END
OF TIME



THINKING
IN MY
CHILD'S
HEART...

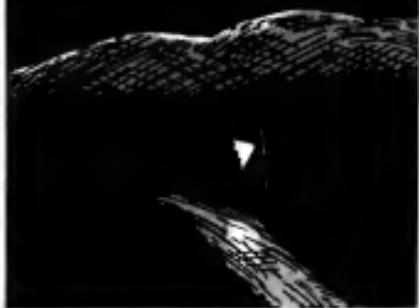
ON THAT
SOUNDLESS
NIGHT...

THE
SENSELESSNESS
OF MY HEART
BEATING
NERVOUSLY.



BEFORE
I KNEW
IT, WE
FELL
ASLEEP...

EACH OF
US HOLDING
THE OTHER.
FACES WET
WITH TEARS.



E
E
E
E
R
R
R



WHAT IS THIS
TREMBLING
HEART?

AAAH WHAT
EXACTLY
IS THE
TREMBLING
OF THE
HUMAN
HEART?



YES, YES,
THAT'S
ENOUGH.

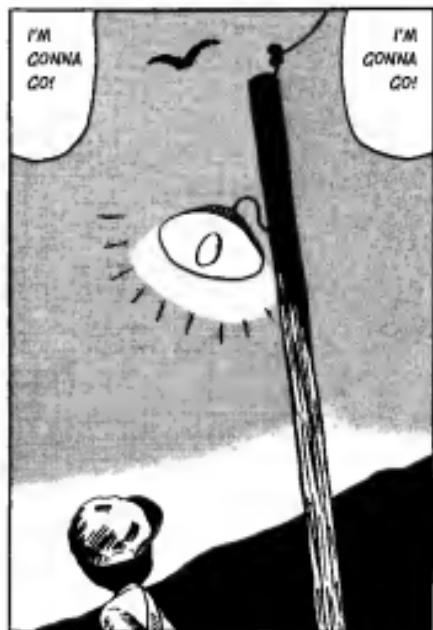
SAY...

ISN'T
IT A
QUIET
NIGHT?











LISTENING
WITH MY
WHOLE SELF
TO THE
SOUND OF
THE MARBLES
IN MY
POCKET...

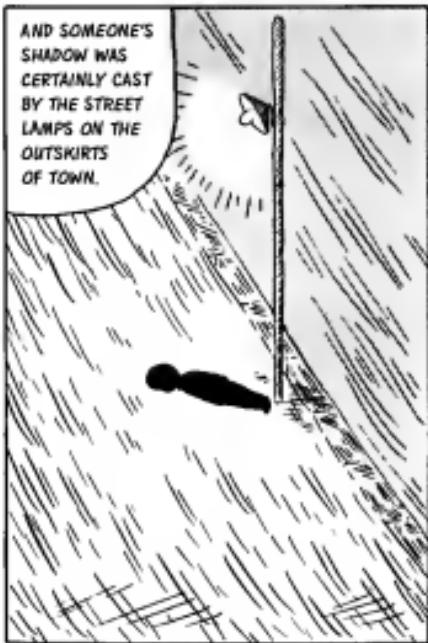
IT PROBABLY
TURNED THAT
CORNER NOW.
DON'T PAY ANY
ATTENTION
TO THAT
LONELY
SHADOW.



AAA—

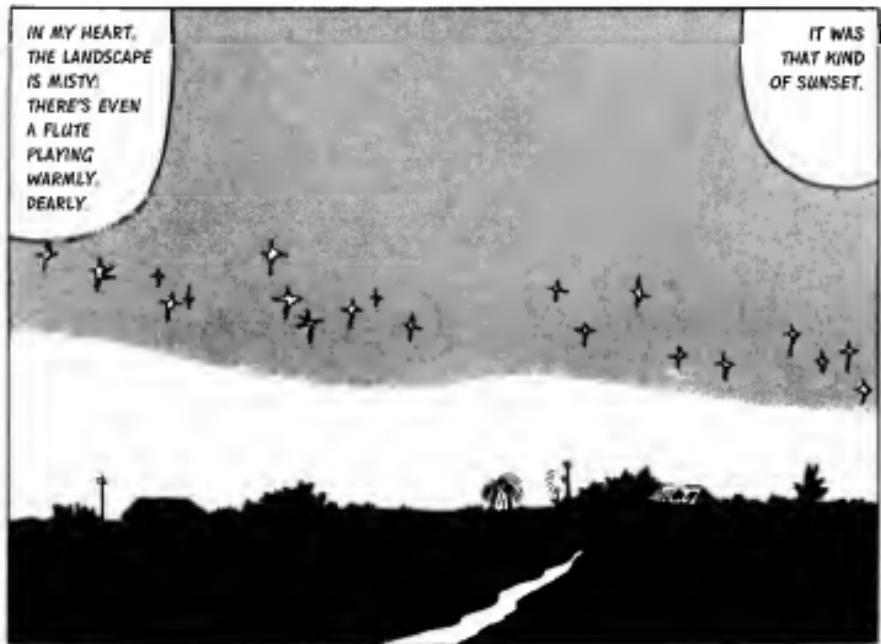






IN MY HEART,
THE LANDSCAPE
IS MISTY.
THERE'S EVEN
A FLUTE
PLAYING
WARMLY,
DEARLY.

IT WAS
THAT KIND
OF SUNSET.



THE
END

THERE
IS ONLY
THIS.



THAT'S
THE
WHOLE
OF MY
MEMORY.

YES,
YES...

I WILL
HAVE
ALL
OF IT.



AAAHH...
ISN'T IT
A QUIET
NIGHT?

SOMEHOW, I...

MY LONG, LONG
LONELINESS...



WAS SO
THAT I COULD
TELL YOU MY
MEMORIES...

LIKE THIS
TONIGHT...

AND NOT
HELP BUT
FEEL LIKE
THEY'RE
REAL.



SAY...

YOU'RE
YOUNG...

PLEASE
REMEMBER...

A LONG TIME
AGO, UNDER
THIS NIGHT
SKY...



YOU ONCE
EMBRACED
WITH A
TREMBLING
HEART...

AND NOW,
IN SOME
UNKNOWN
TOWN...

...A CHILD
IS CRYING.



I'VE TOLD YOU
THE STORY OF
MY MEMORIES.

THIS QUIET
NIGHT...THIS
TIME...

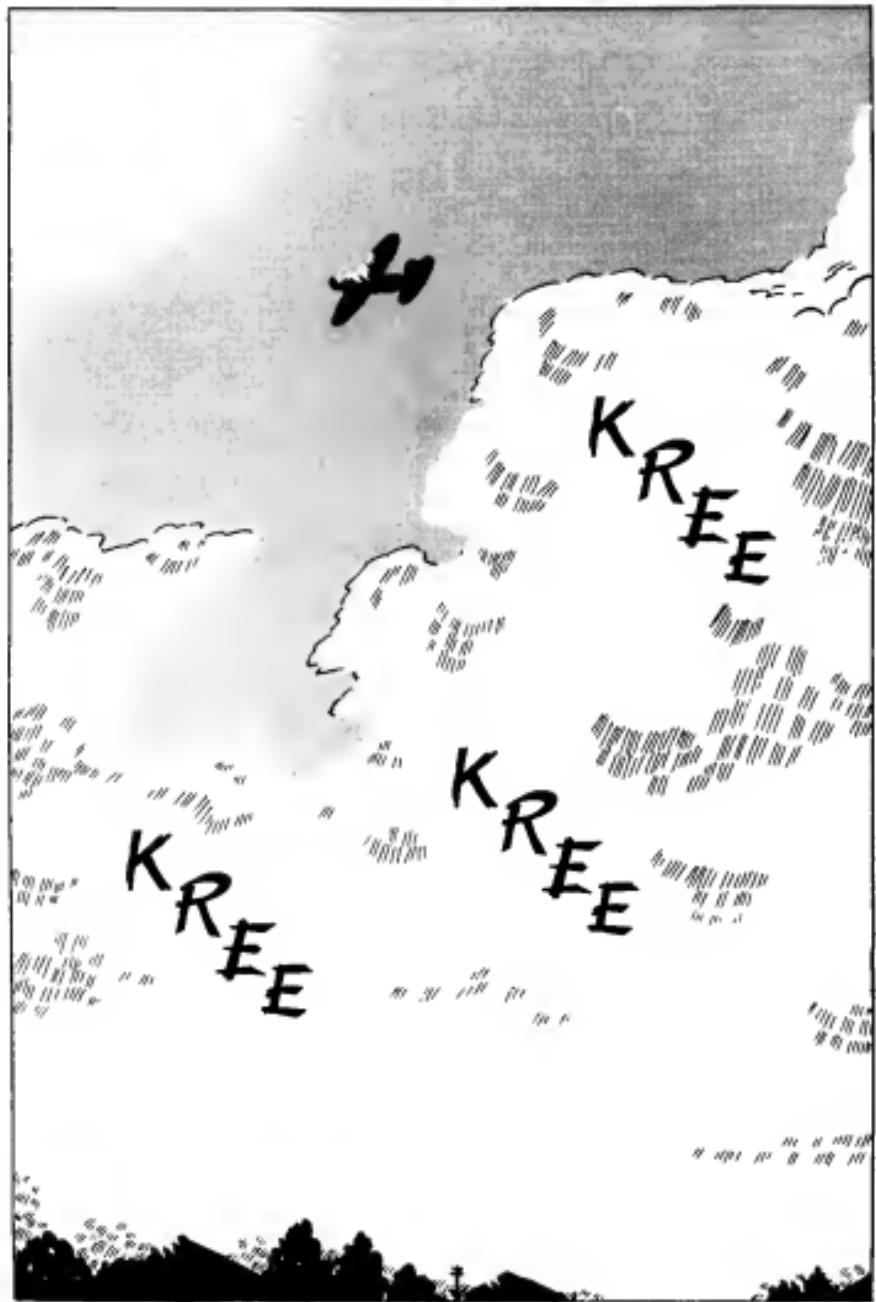
I HOPE IT
SOMEHOW...

BECOMES
EVEN JUST A
TINY PIECE
OF YOUR
MEMORY.

CHEERS!



WORLD
COLORED
PANTS









SIGN: ICE

SIGN (LEFT): BIG WINNER INSIDE; (RIGHT, FRONT): 35 YEN



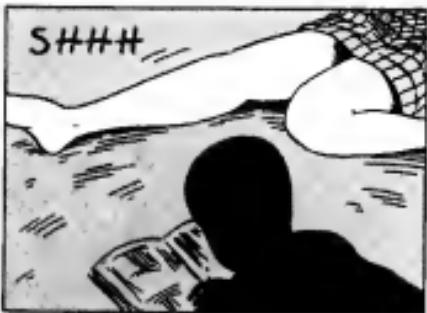


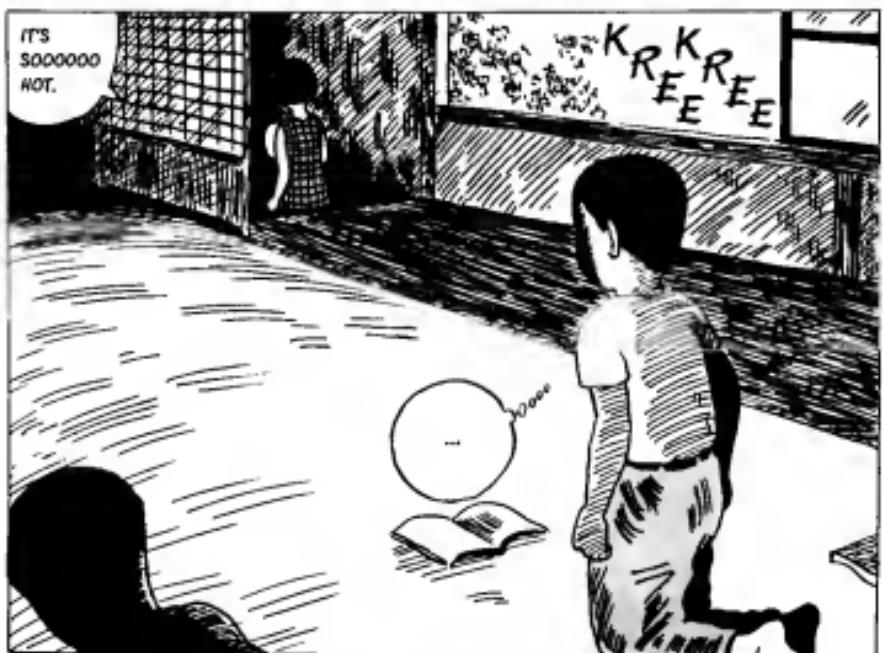


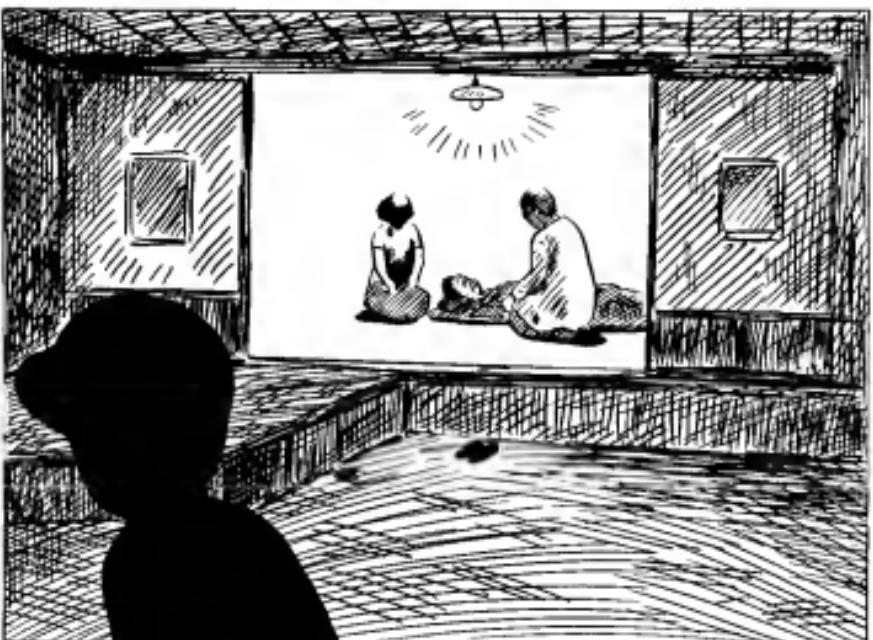














IT DIDN'T
EVEN FEEL
A LITTLE
GOOD.

SO WHAT?



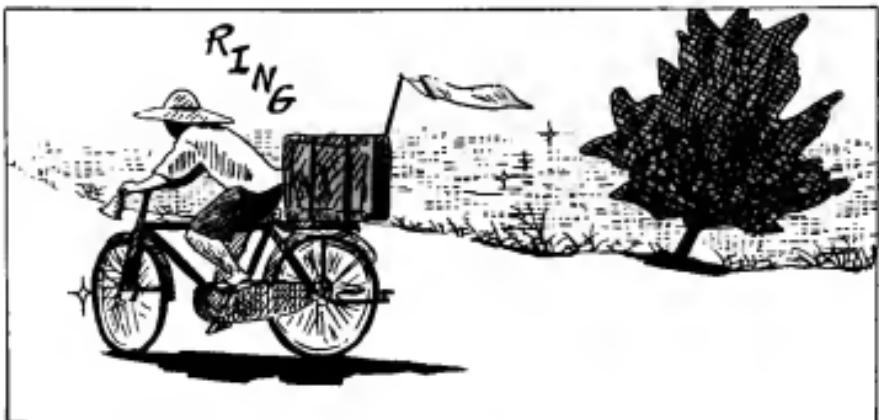
IT'S A
GOOD,
GOOD-
FEELING
THING.























YOU WANNA
GO TO HELL?



EVENING
PRIMROSE



BUILDING: ARESU MACHINING





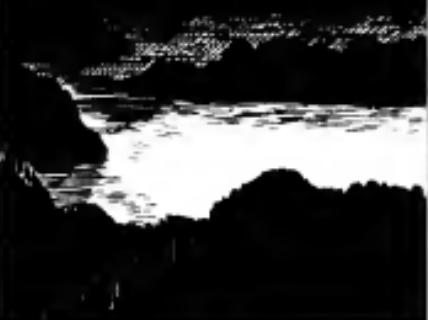
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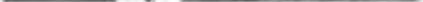


















TOWN OF
SONG



TOMOKO
LIKES THE
RIVERBANK.



SHE'D LIKE TO
TRY TO GO TO
THE FOREST SHE
CAN SEE ON THE
OTHER SIDE.

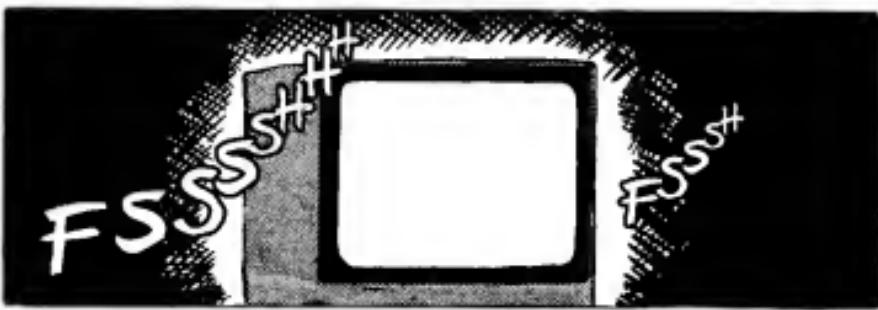


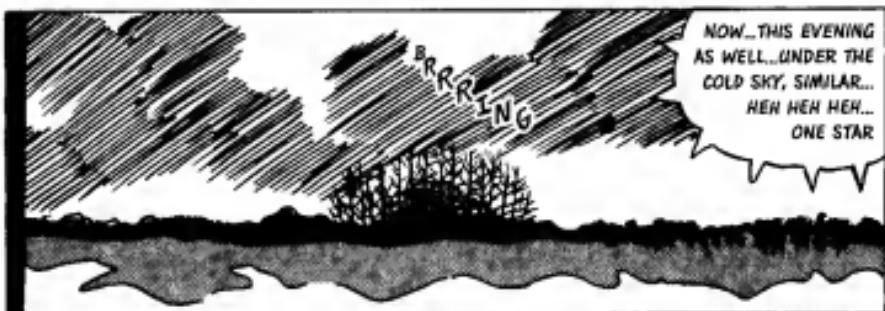
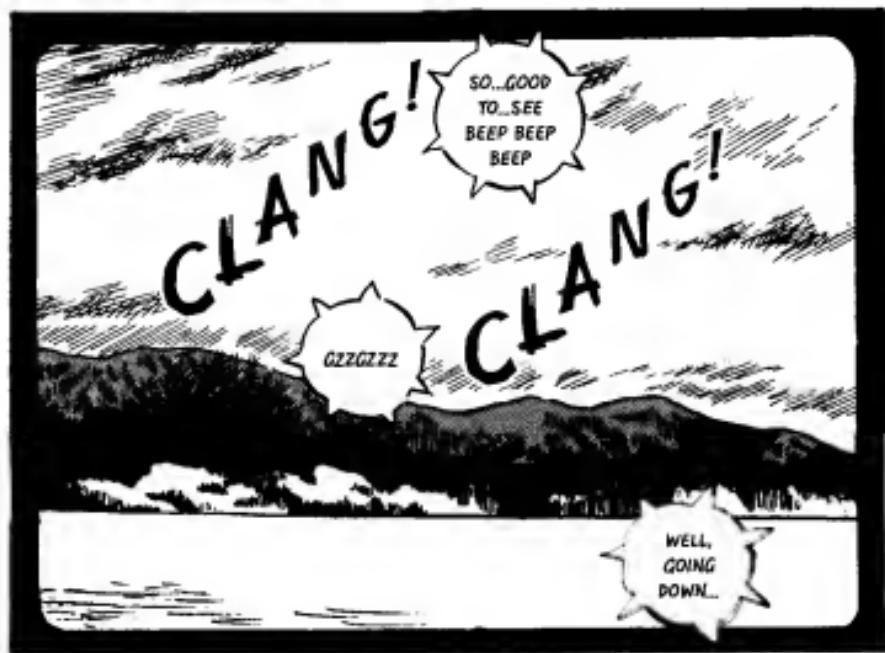
BUT TOMOKO...
THE RAIN'S STOPPED,
YOU KNOW.







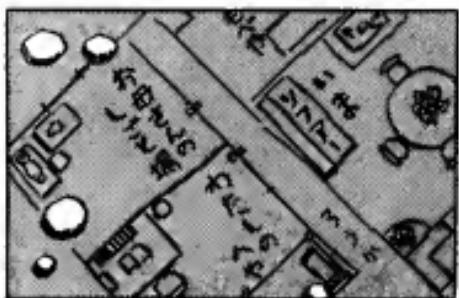
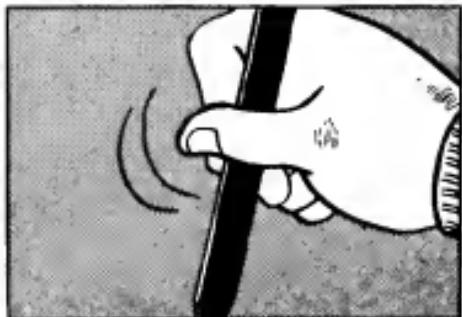






SIGNS: DANGER





CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: MOM'S WORK; TATSUO'S ROOM; TV; LIVING ROOM; SOFA; HALLWAY; MY ROOM.



CLANG CLANG

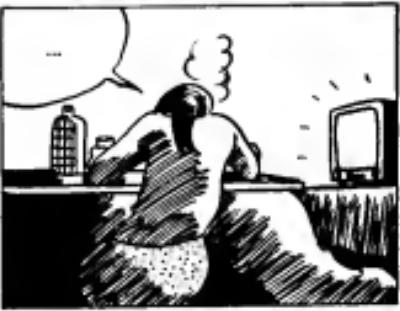
AND AGAIN
TONIGHT, OUR
HAPPY PARTY?
HIC! SORRY.



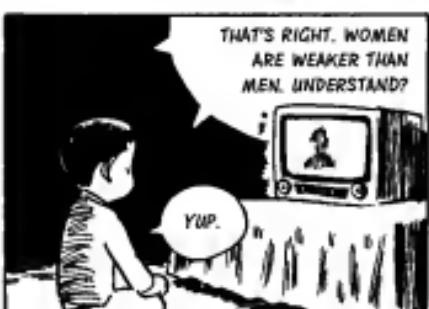


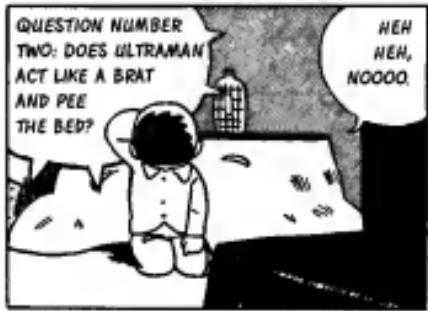
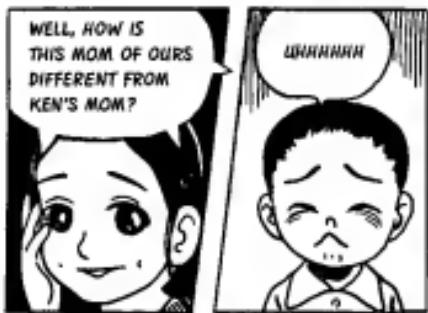






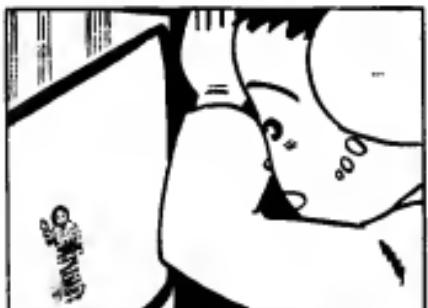
















CRYSTAL
THOUGHTS

I WANTED
A SET OF
CRYSTALS.



I FELT LIKE
IF I PUT THE
HEADPHONES
ON, I WOULD
BE ABLE TO
HEAR THE
SECRETS OF
FARAWAY
TOWNS..

SO...

K
E
E



THE TIME I
WENT WITH MY
FATHER TO NAGOYA,
THE TWO OF US
LOOKED SHABBY
AMIDST THE
CROWD.



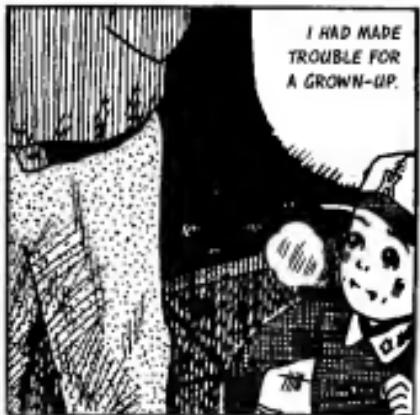
K
E
E

I USED
A DIRTY
TRACK.













MOUNTAIN TOWN





SIGN (LEFT TO RIGHT): KAMEYA, SWEETS

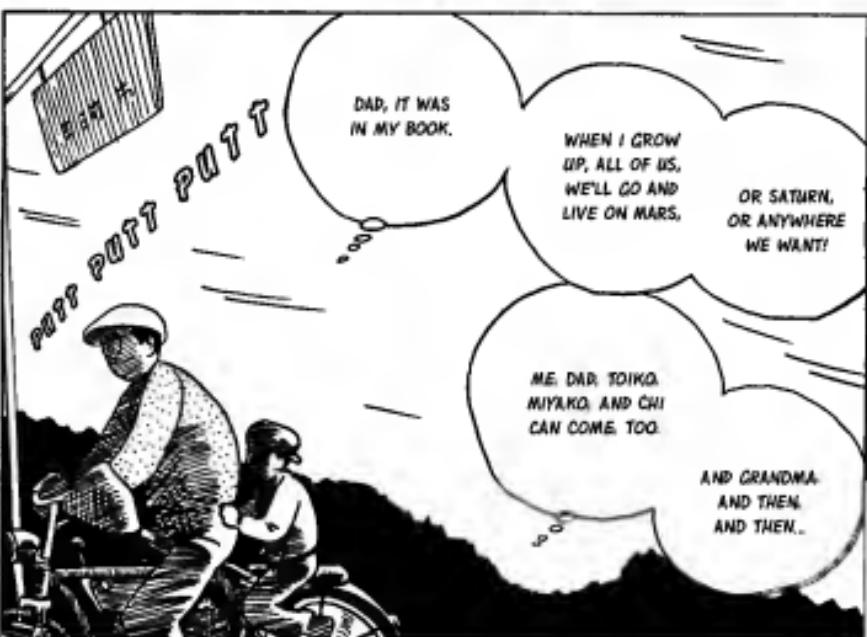




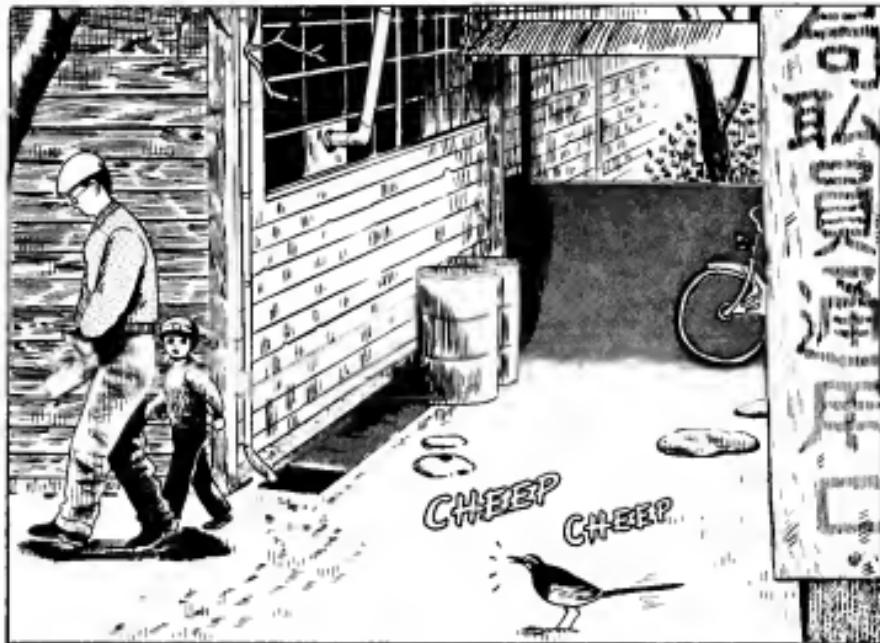


SIGN: CIGARETTES



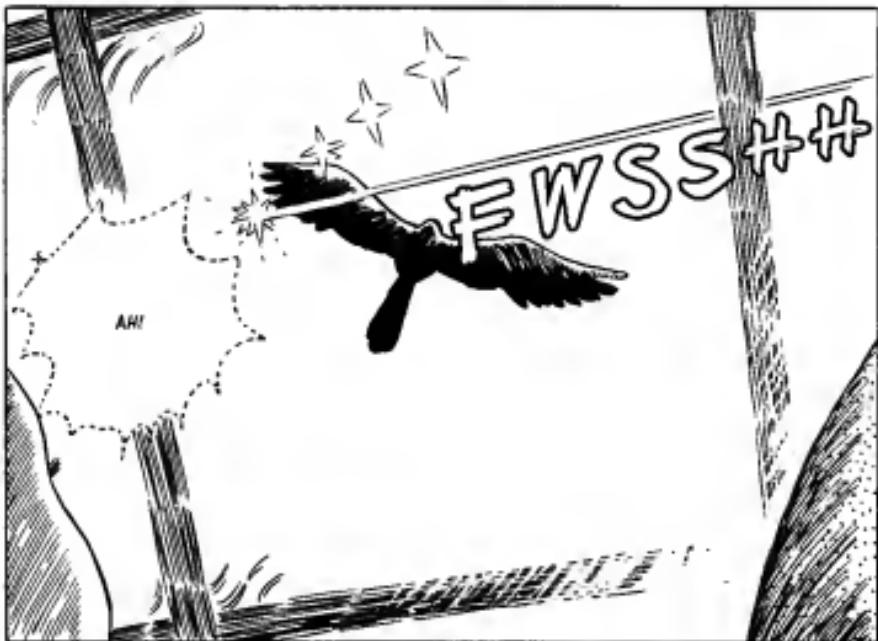


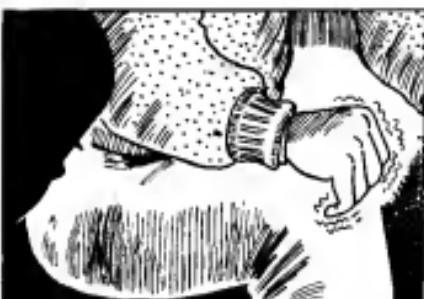




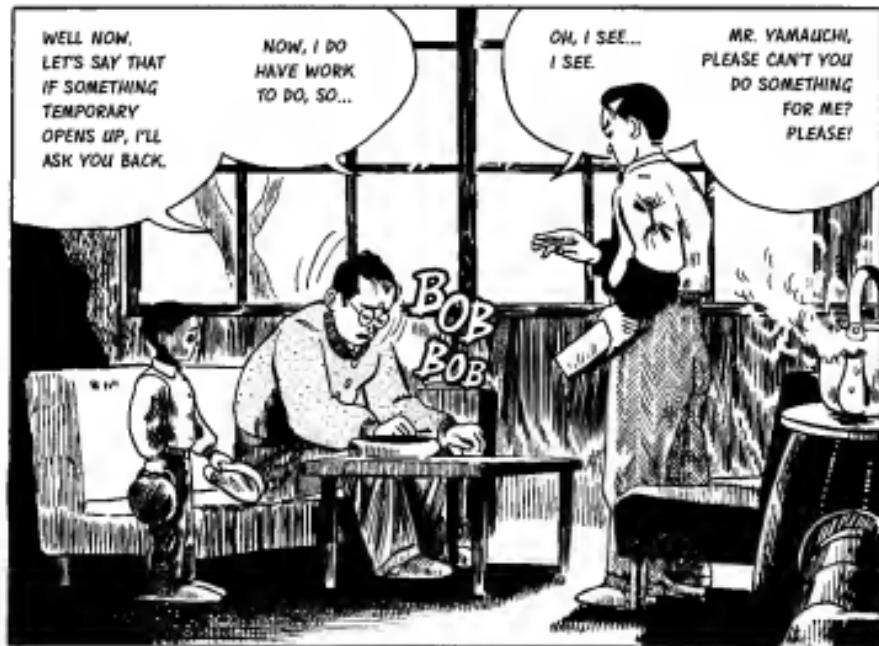
SIGN: OFFICE SERVICE ENTRANCE













SIGN: JAPAN TRANSPORT



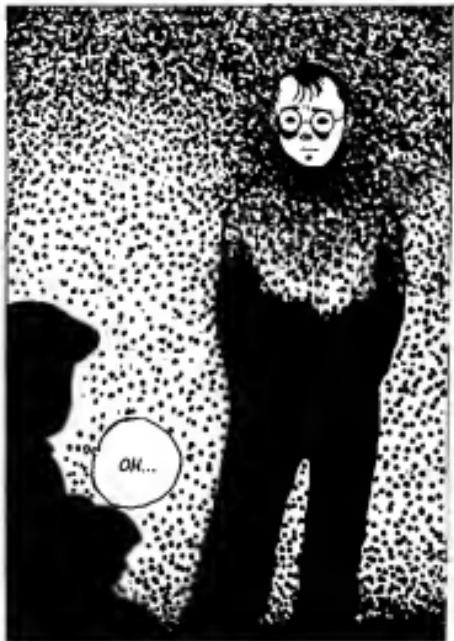






SIGN: HIBARY HALL

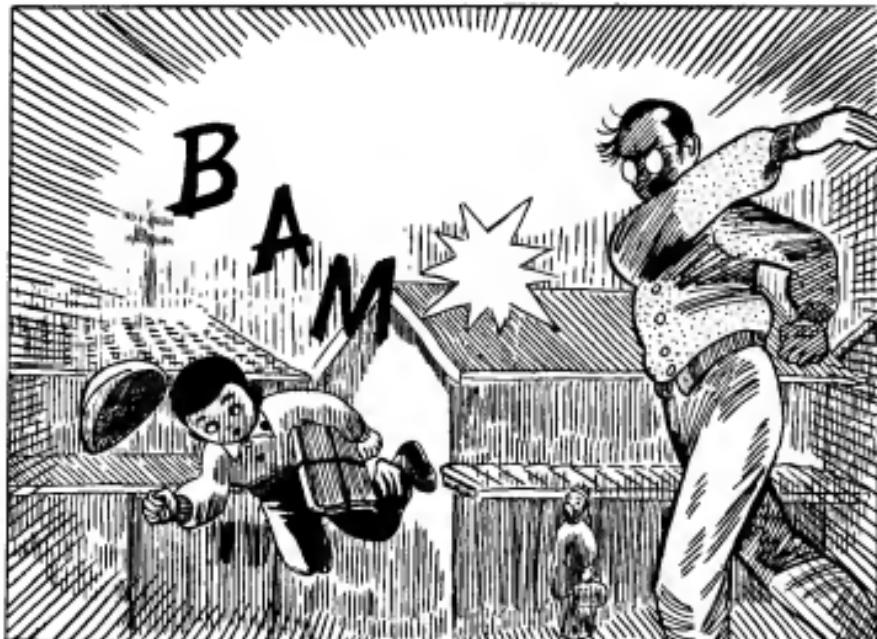






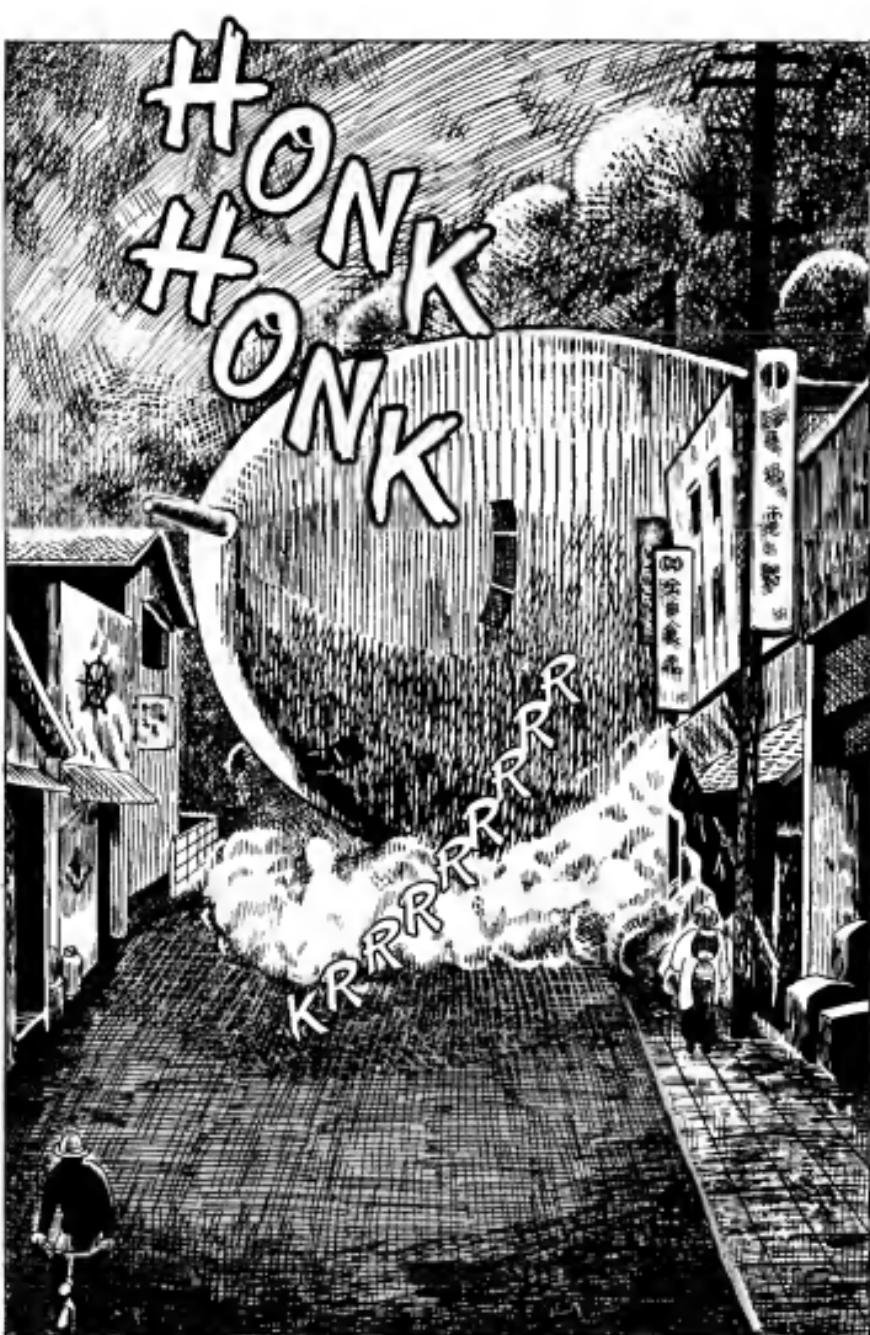






HONK
HONK

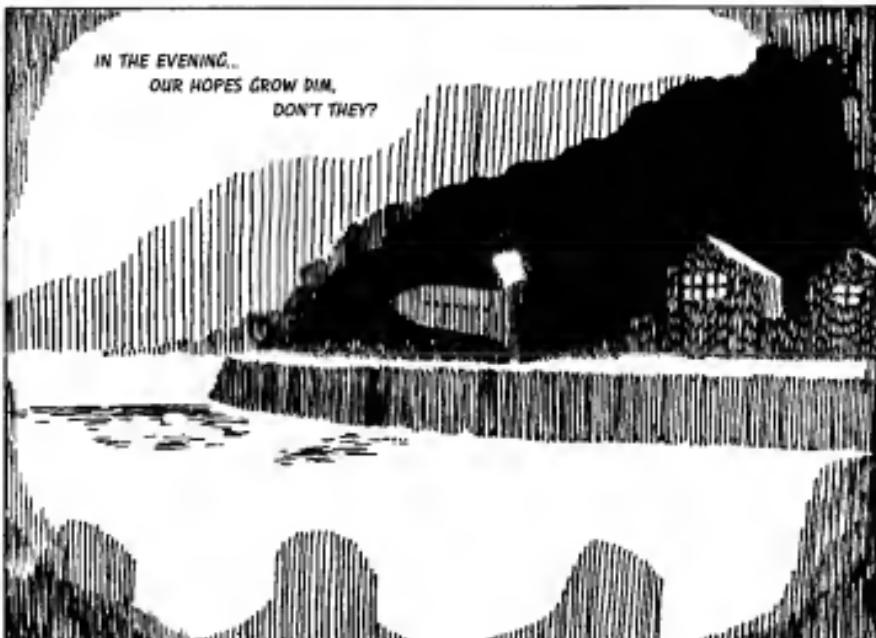
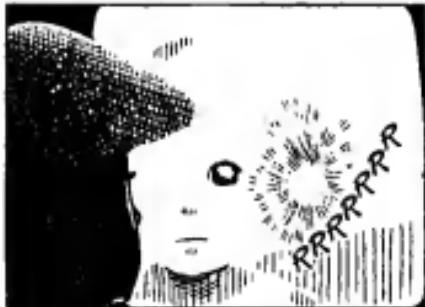
KRRRRR

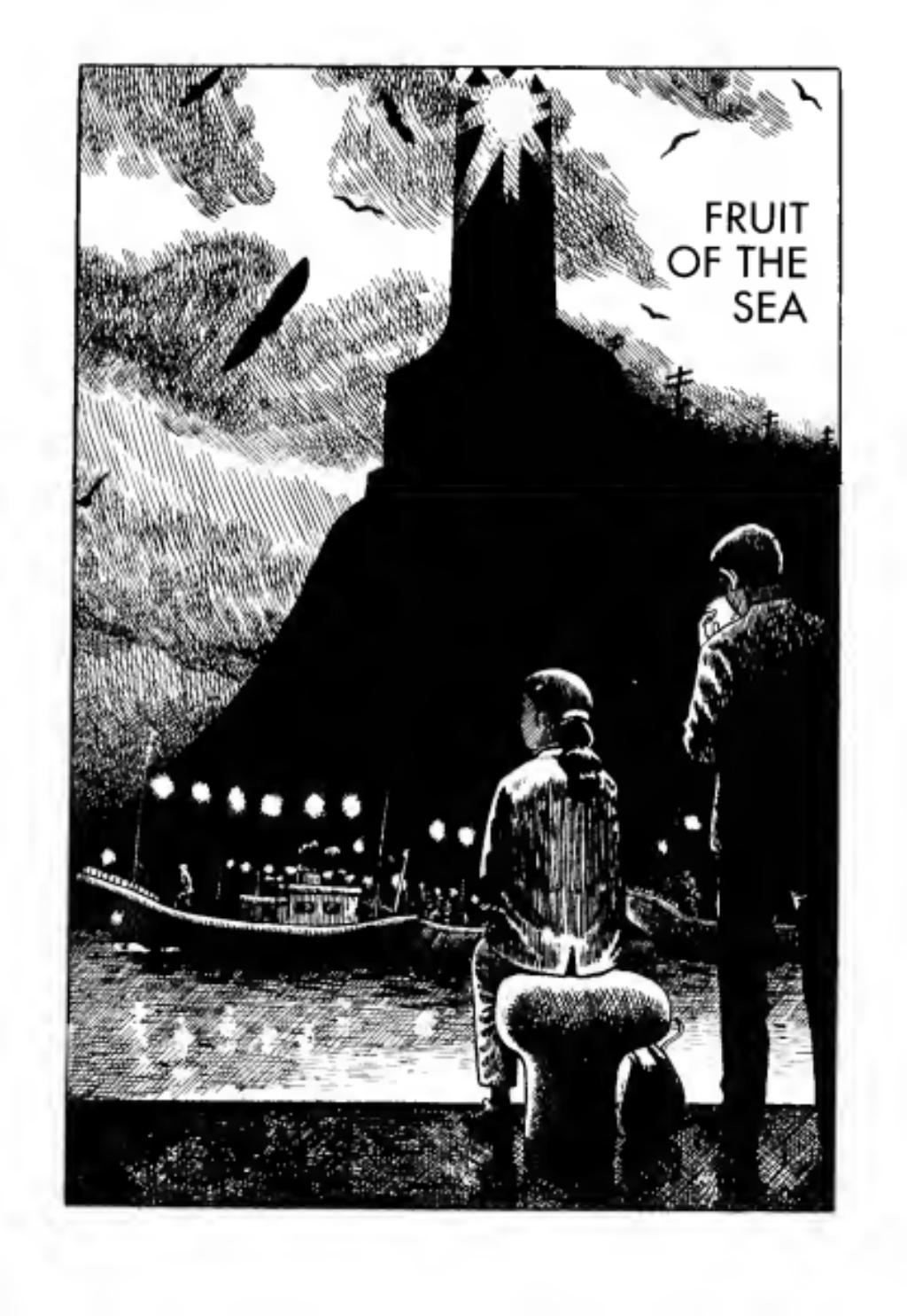


SIGNS (LEFT TO RIGHT). COFFEE, ZENNICH FOODS, AIKI ELECTRIC





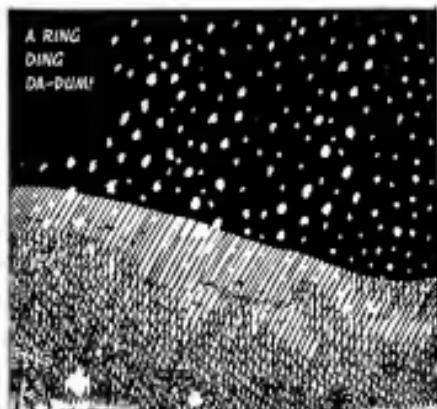




FRUIT
OF THE
SEA

Chapter One

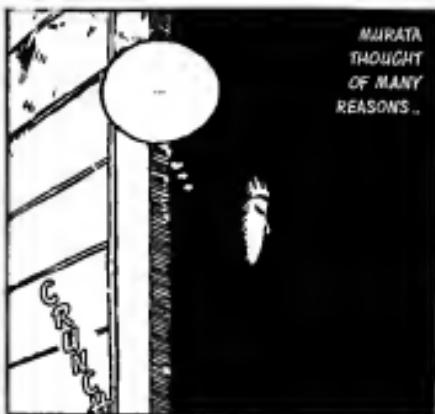
SEA

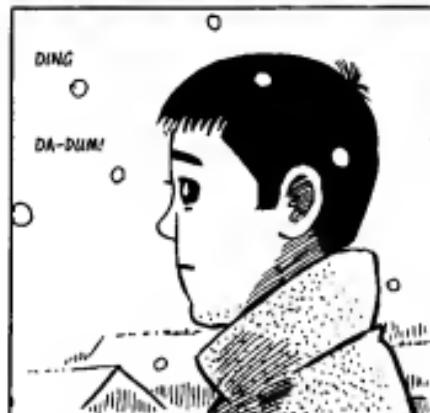






CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT: CIGARETTES; RAMEN; RAMEN







Chapter Two
BREAKWATER





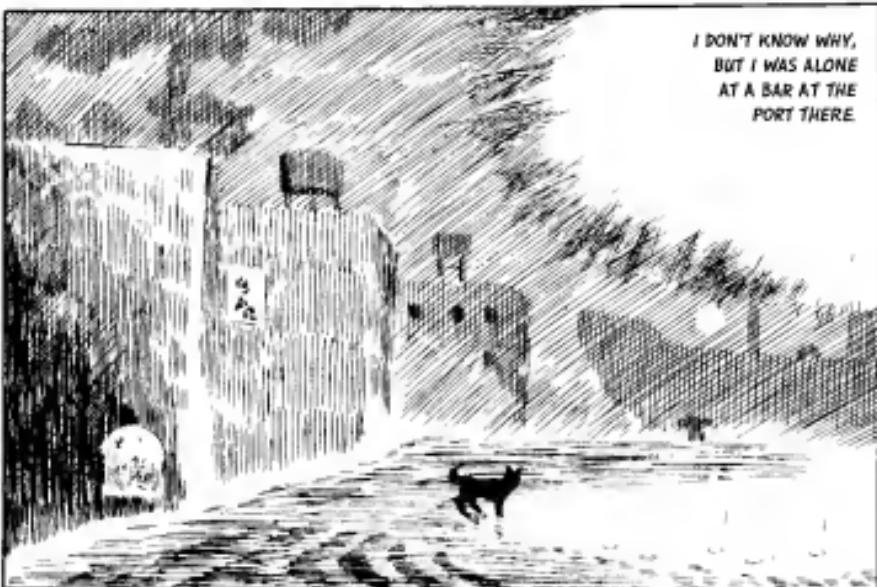
SIGN BELOW: FIXED MENU

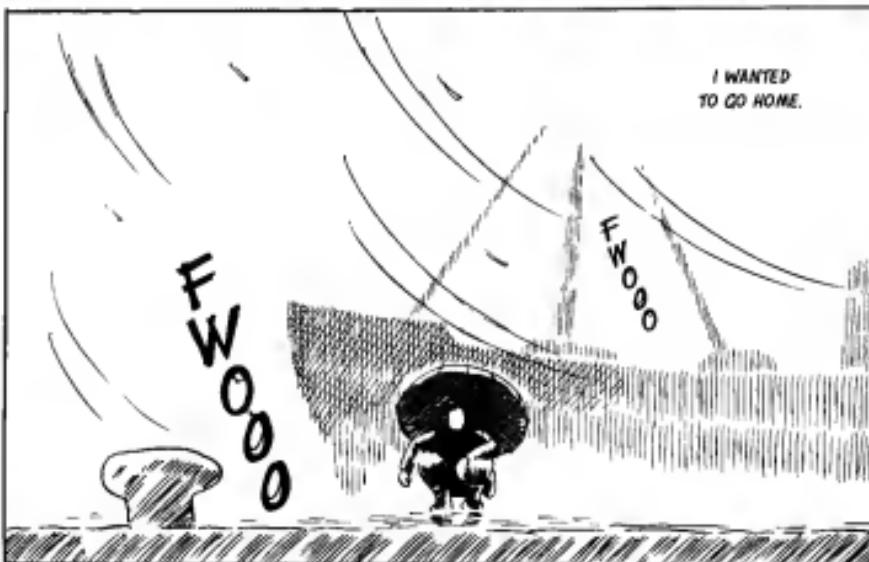


















TAMO, TAMO...

I TOLD YOU
I'VE SPENT
MY LIFE
ALONE,
RIGHT?

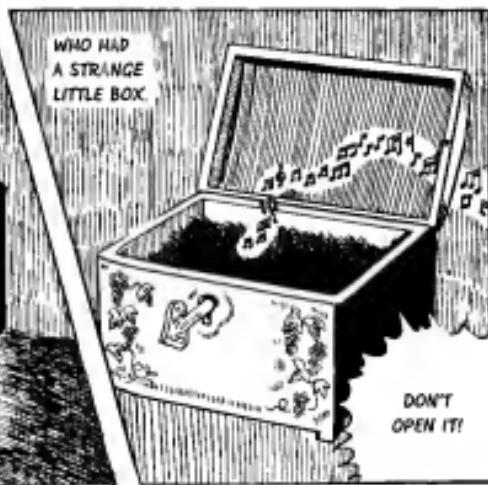
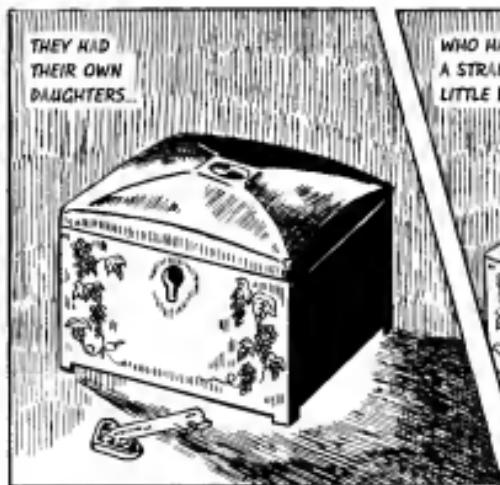


MY EARLIEST MEMORY
IS OF BEING IN A
RELATIVE'S HOUSE,
FORCED TO WORK
RATHER THAN STUDY.



I MUST
HAVE BEEN
A TWISTED,
UGLY
GIRL.





ONE DAY, I STOLE IT AND RAN AWAY FROM HOME.

THAT WAS
THE DAY I
FINISHED
JUNIOR
HIGH
SCHOOL



AND THEN
I CAME
TO THIS
TOWN.

555

AND I GUESS
IT WAS BECAUSE
I WAS ALONE.



I BECAME
A TIGHT-LIPPED,
ILL-TEMPERED
FACTORY GIRL.



網
株式会社

MY NAME
IS HISAE KAI.
I'M A TACITURN
GIRL AND A
CRYBABY.

I'M AN
EMPLOYEE
AT A NETTING
FACTORY, BUT...
MY DREAM IS
TO BECOME A
HAIRDRESSER!

SIGN: --MO CO., LTD.

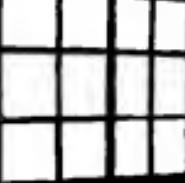
網
株式会社

IF IT'S
ALL RIGHT
WITH YOU...
PLEASE...

BE MY
FRIEND...
PLEASE!

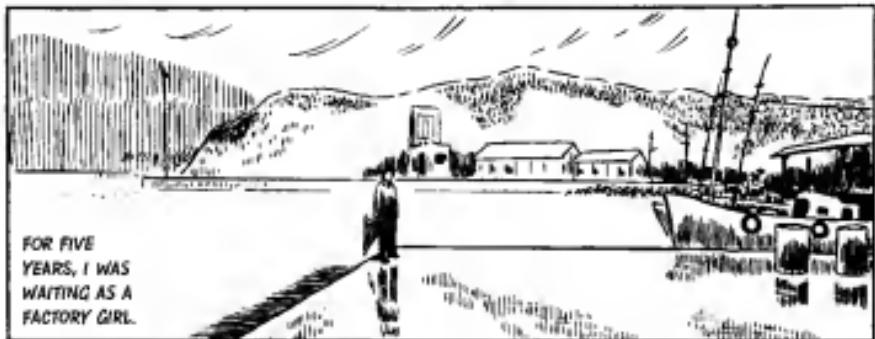
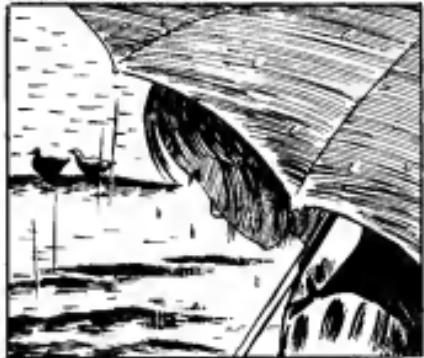
SIGN: --MO CO., LTD.

I PUT THE
LETTERS
AND THE
KEY IN THE
MUSIC BOX.





SIGN: SANKYO CHARCOAL







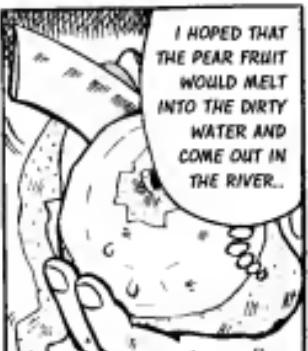








THE GUTTER
WAS TOO
BIG FOR ME!



I HOPED THAT
THE PEAR FRUIT
WOULD MELT
INTO THE DIRTY
WATER AND
COME OUT IN
THE RIVER...

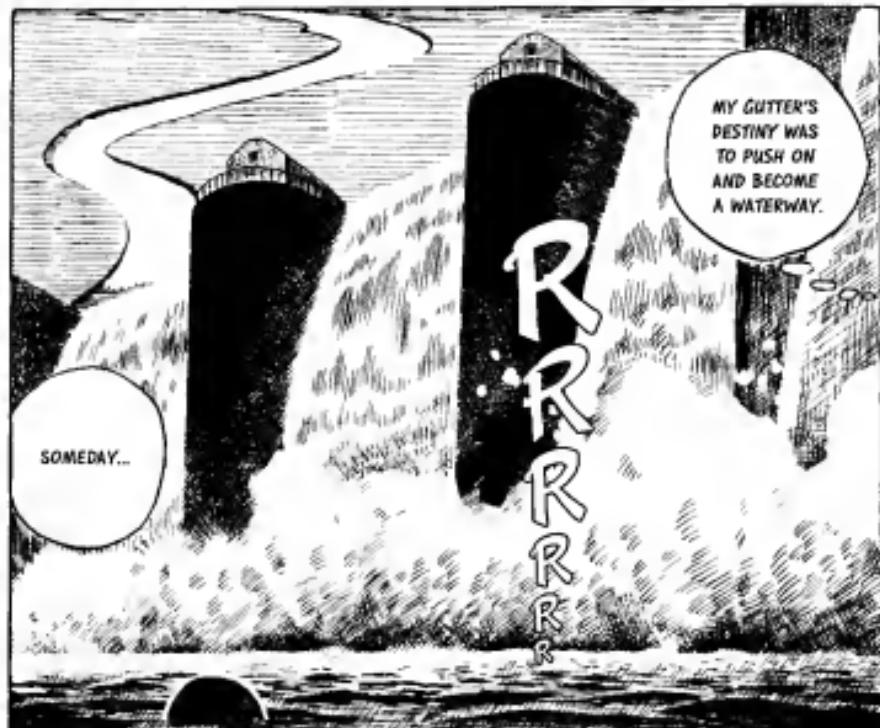


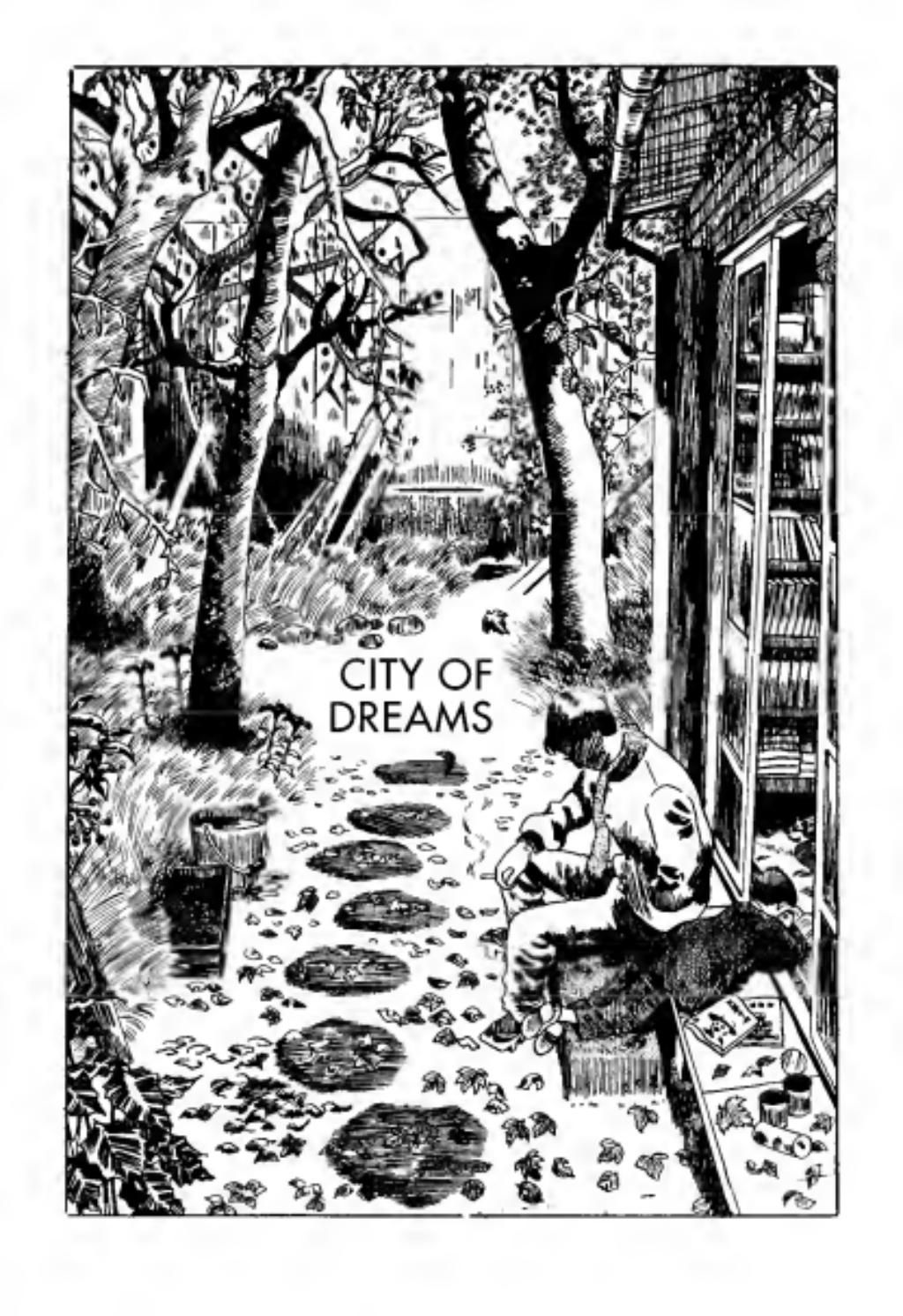
EVENTUALLY
ARRIVING AT
THE SEA.



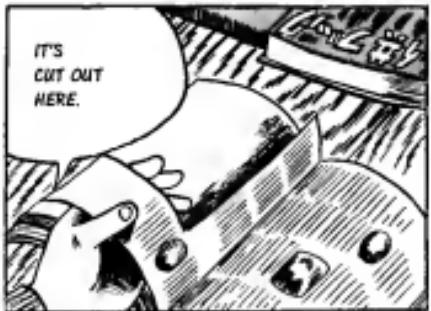
HEY,
TOMOKO!

?





CITY OF
DREAMS



OH!

IT'S
CUT OUT
HERE.



THAT
CUT-OUT
PART.



NOT
NOW...



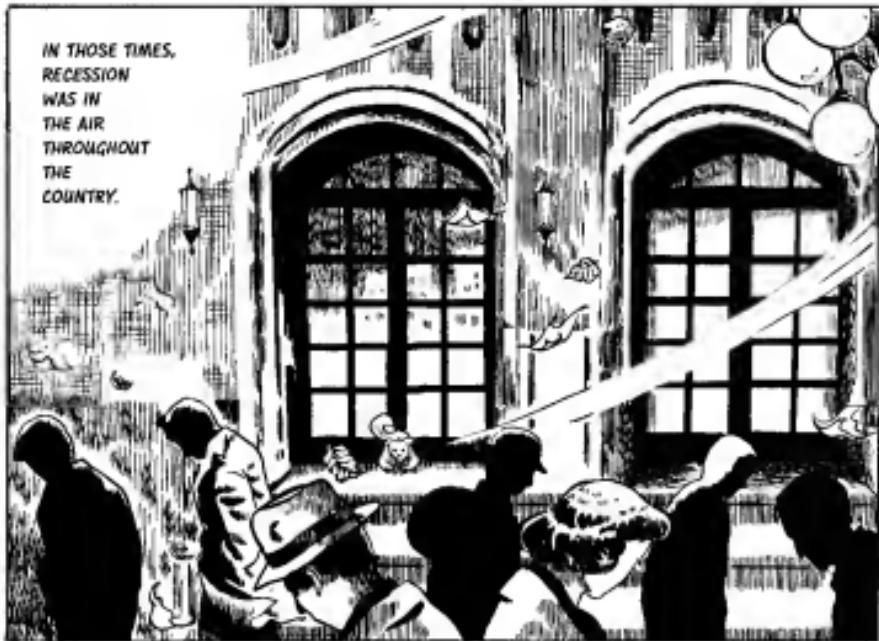
THEY SEEMED COLD,
DIDN'T THEY?

THE SKY AND THE SEA!

RUSTLE
RUSTLE



IN THOSE TIMES,
RECESSION
WAS IN
THE AIR
THROUGHOUT
THE
COUNTRY.



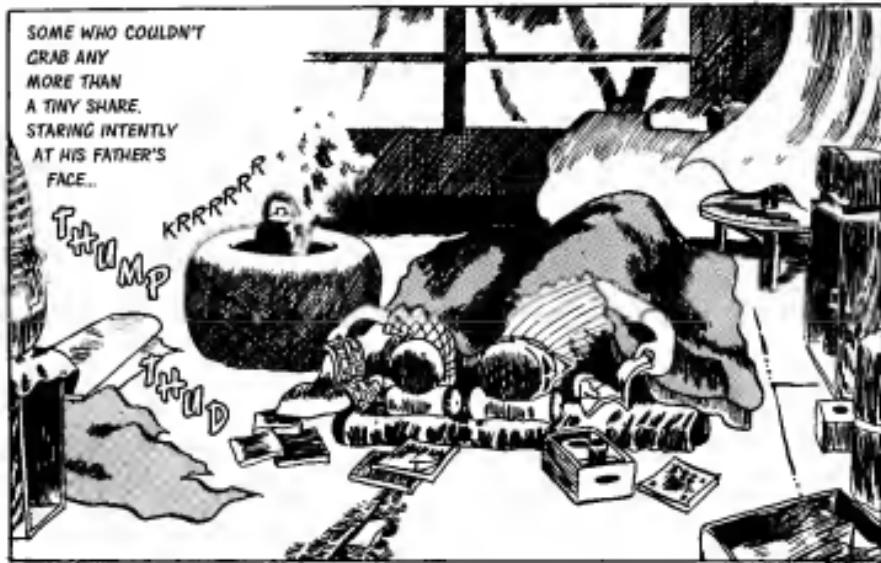
THE FIRE OF WAR
THAT HAD SPREAD
TO THE PENINSULA...

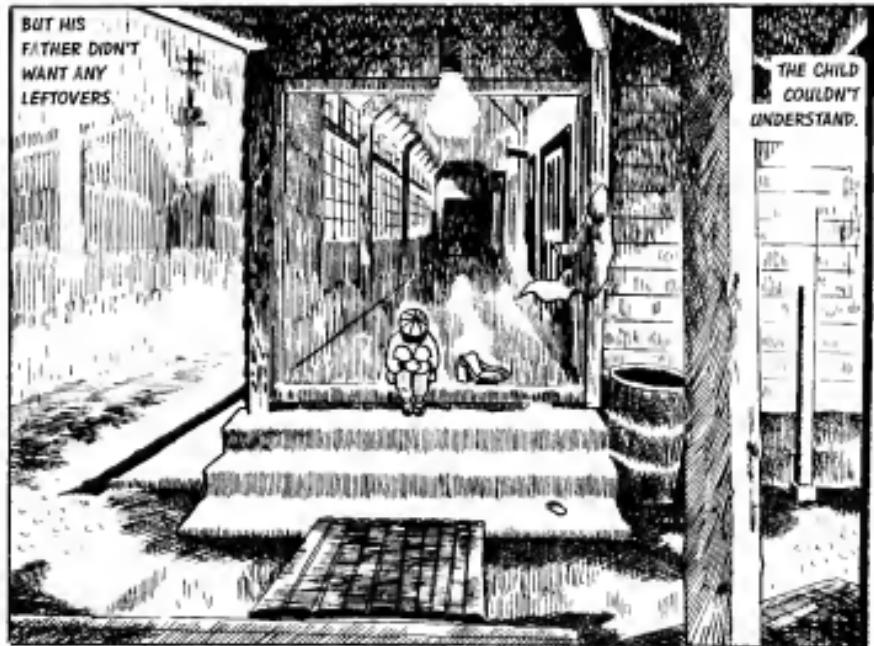


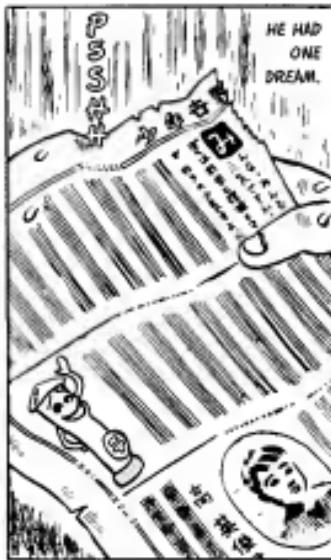
BROUGHT
PROFIT TO
THE COUNTRY,
BUT...

THERE WERE
SOME, LIKE
THE CHILD'S
FATHER...

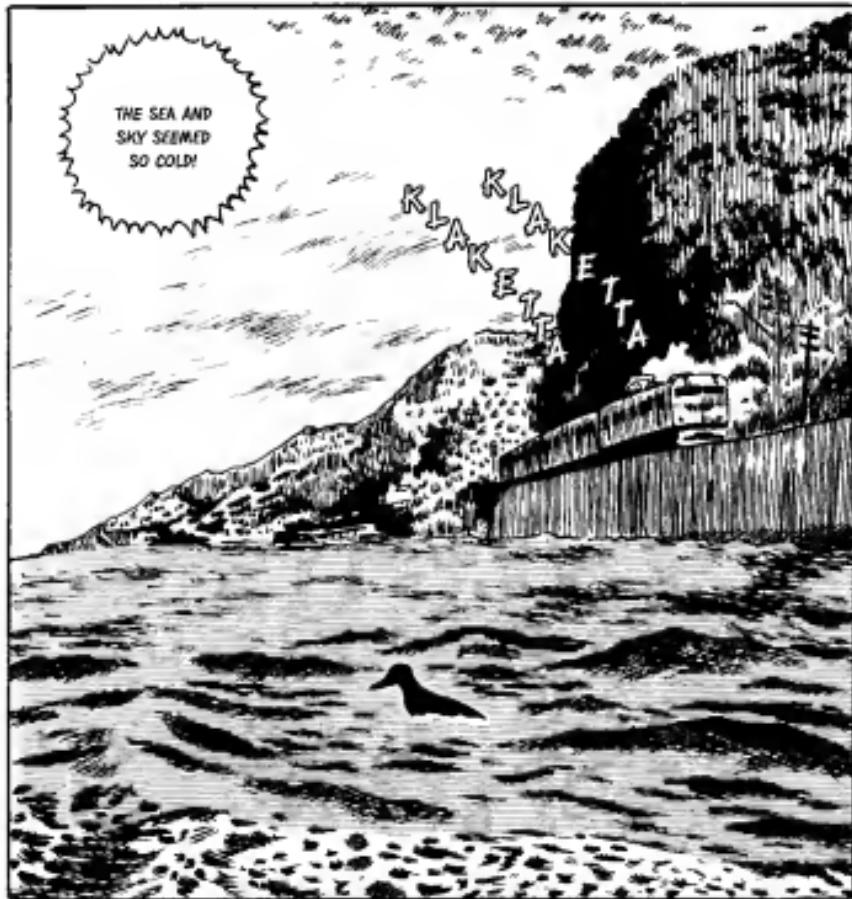
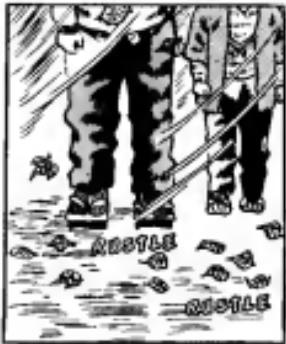




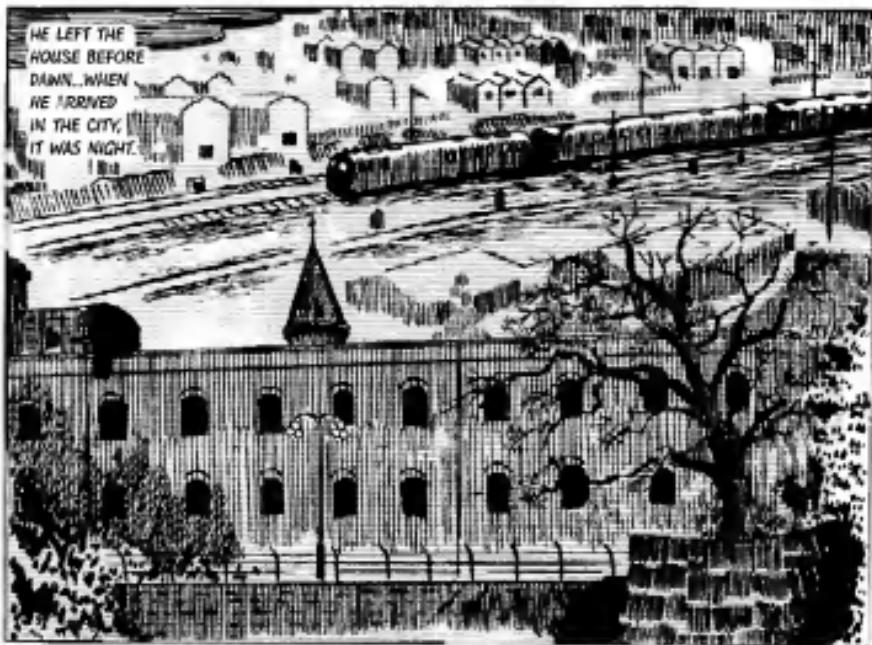












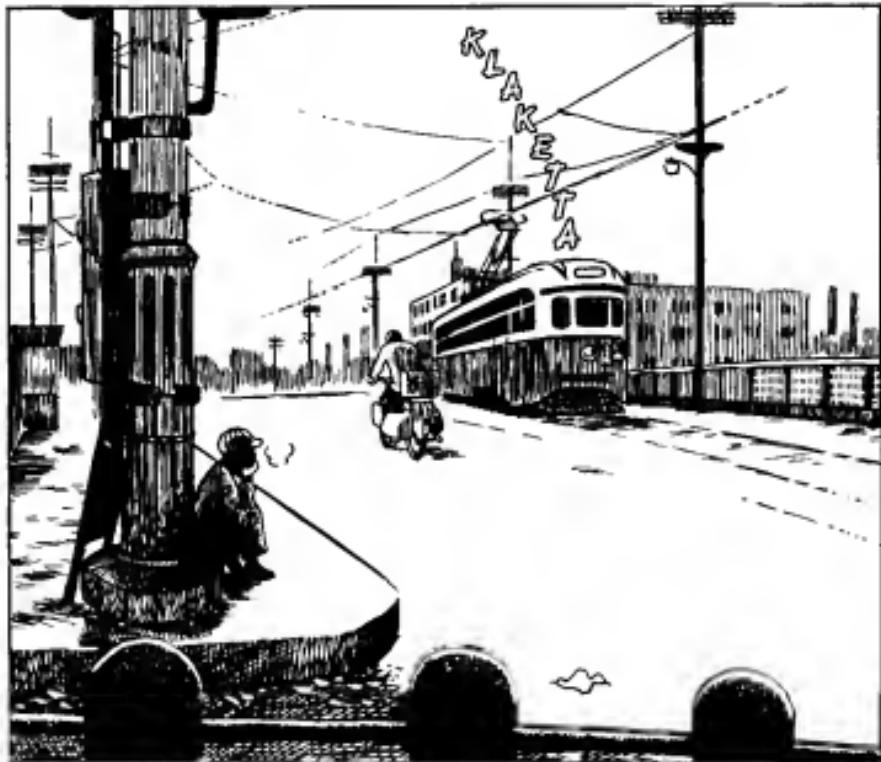
WE LEFT THE
HOUSE BEFORE
DAWN... WHEN
WE ARRIVED
IN THE CITY,
IT WAS NIGHT.



WE ATE SOME UDON
AT A SHOP AND...



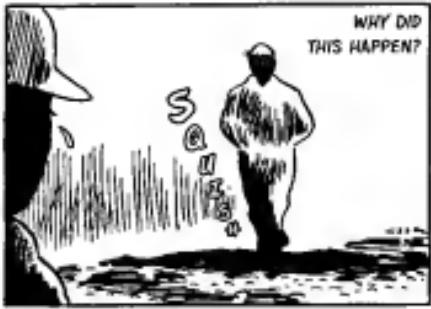
SLEPT ON
A BENCH AT
THE STATION.



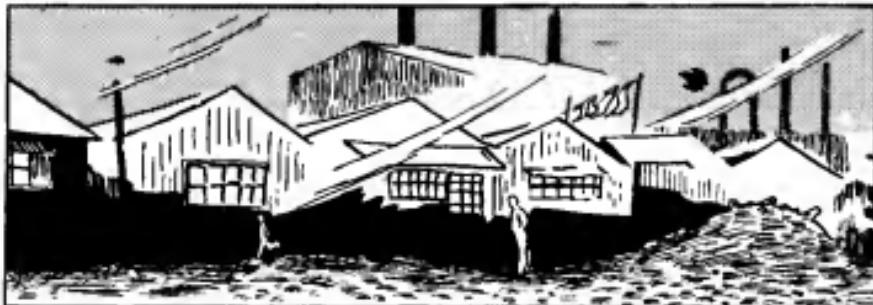






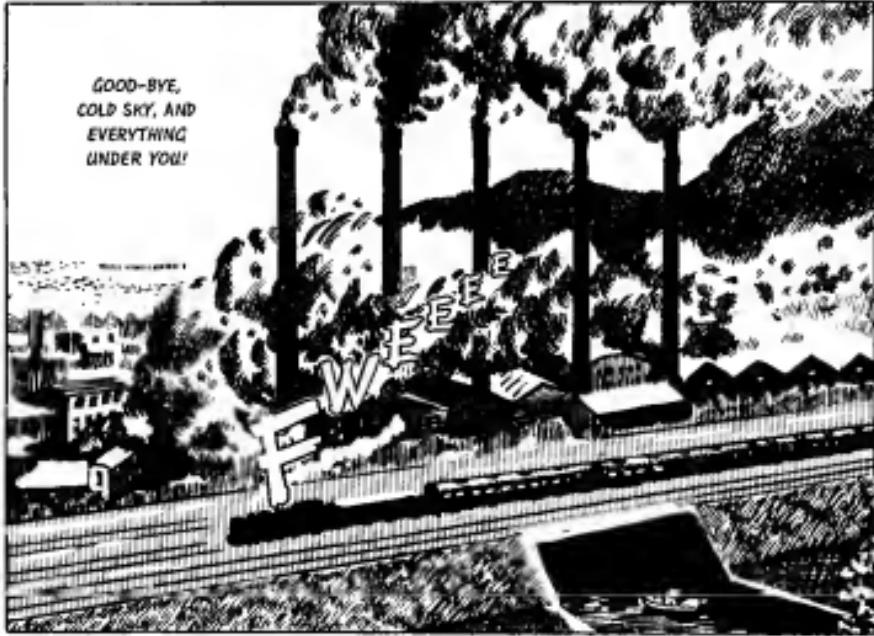
















Oji Suzuki was born in 1949 in Nagoya, Japan. He moved to Tokyo in 1967 and within two years his first short stories were published in the avant-garde Japanese comics magazine *Garo*. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, at least ten collections of his short stories were published. Suzuki has also produced short films and has written and drawn children's books.



